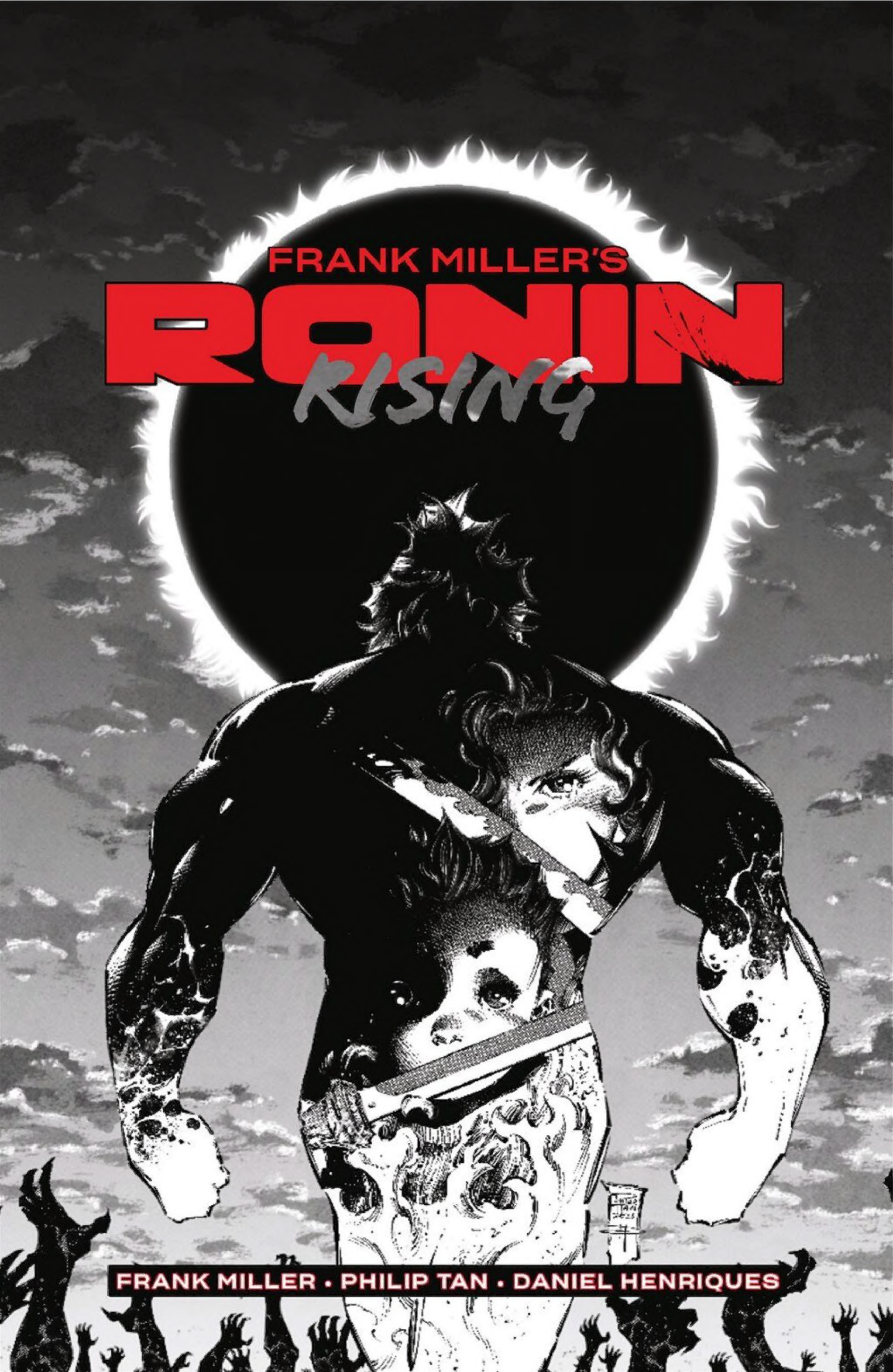
FRANK MILLER'S

RONIN RISING



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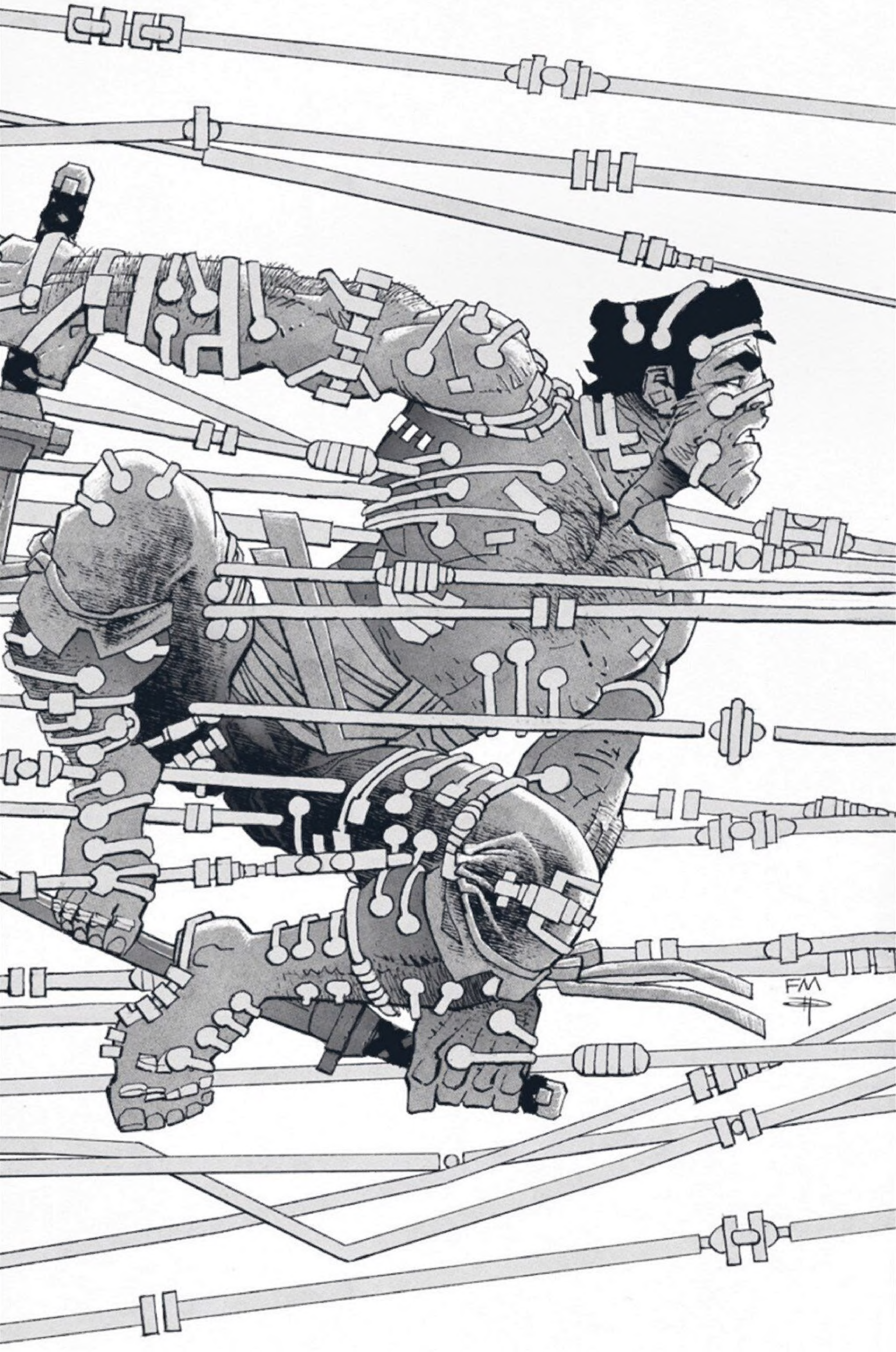
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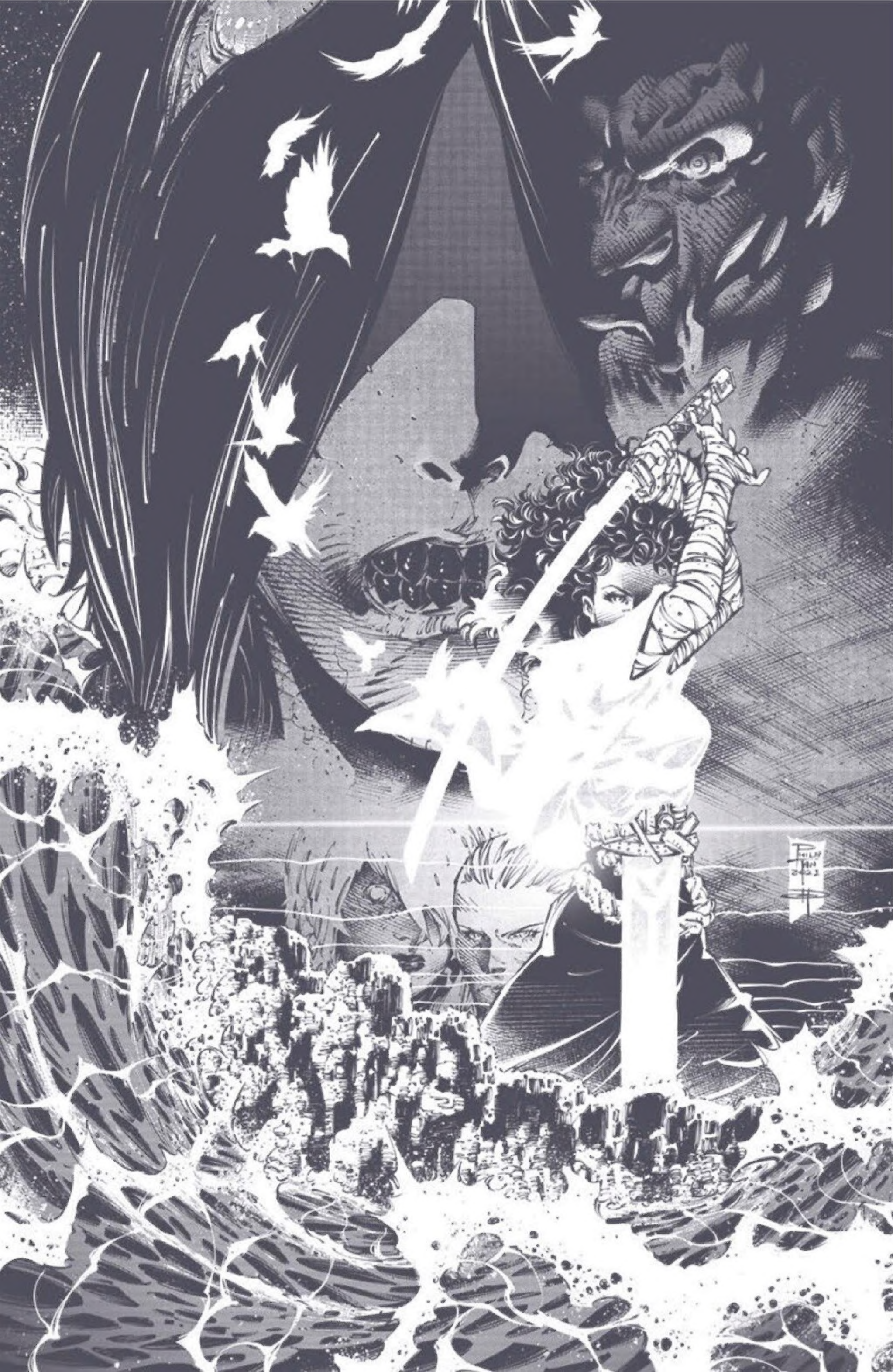

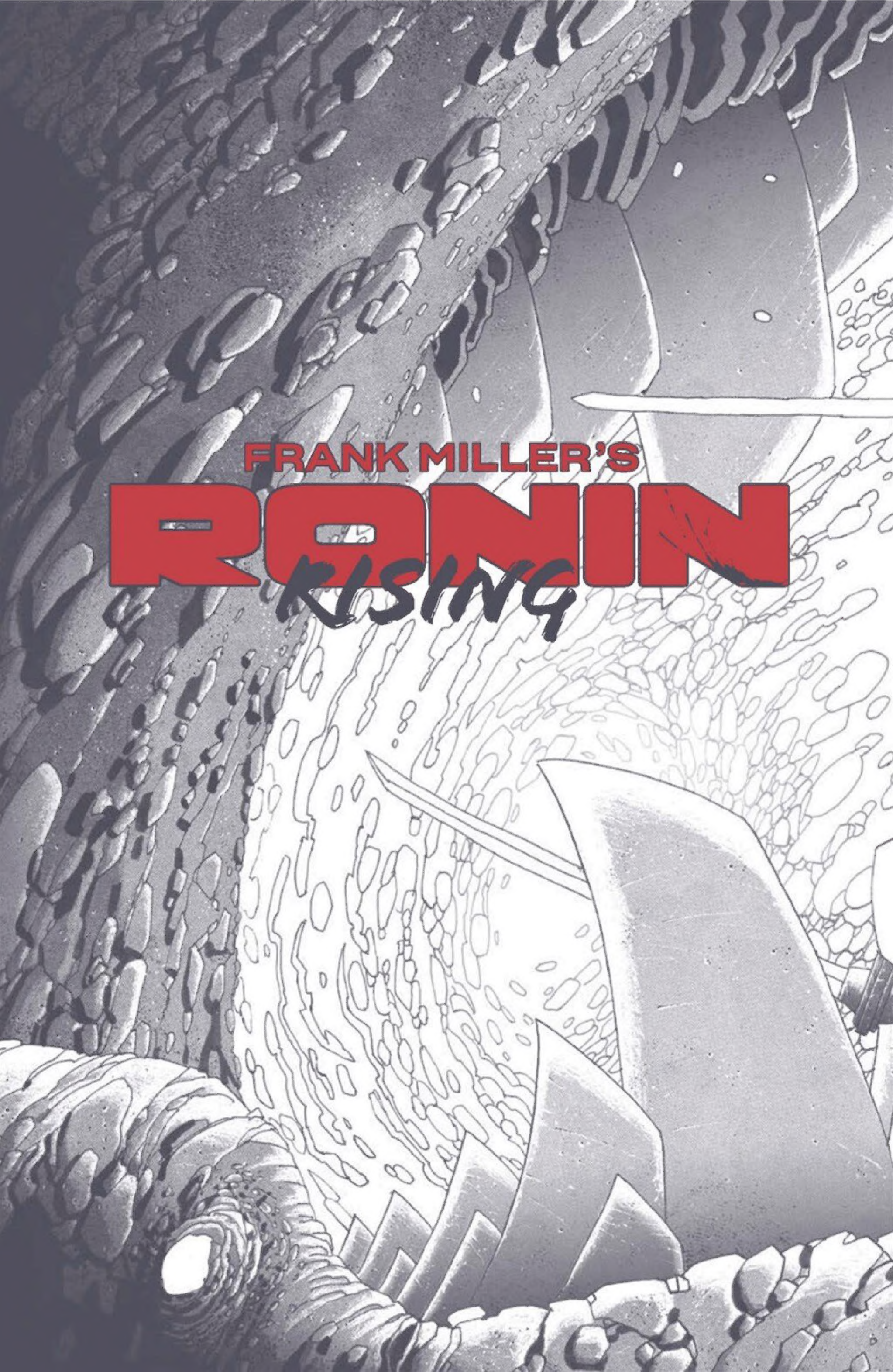
FRANK MILLER'S
RONIN
RISING

FRANK MILLER • PHILIP TAN • DANIEL HENRIQUES • JOHN WORKMAN

kana

For Kana

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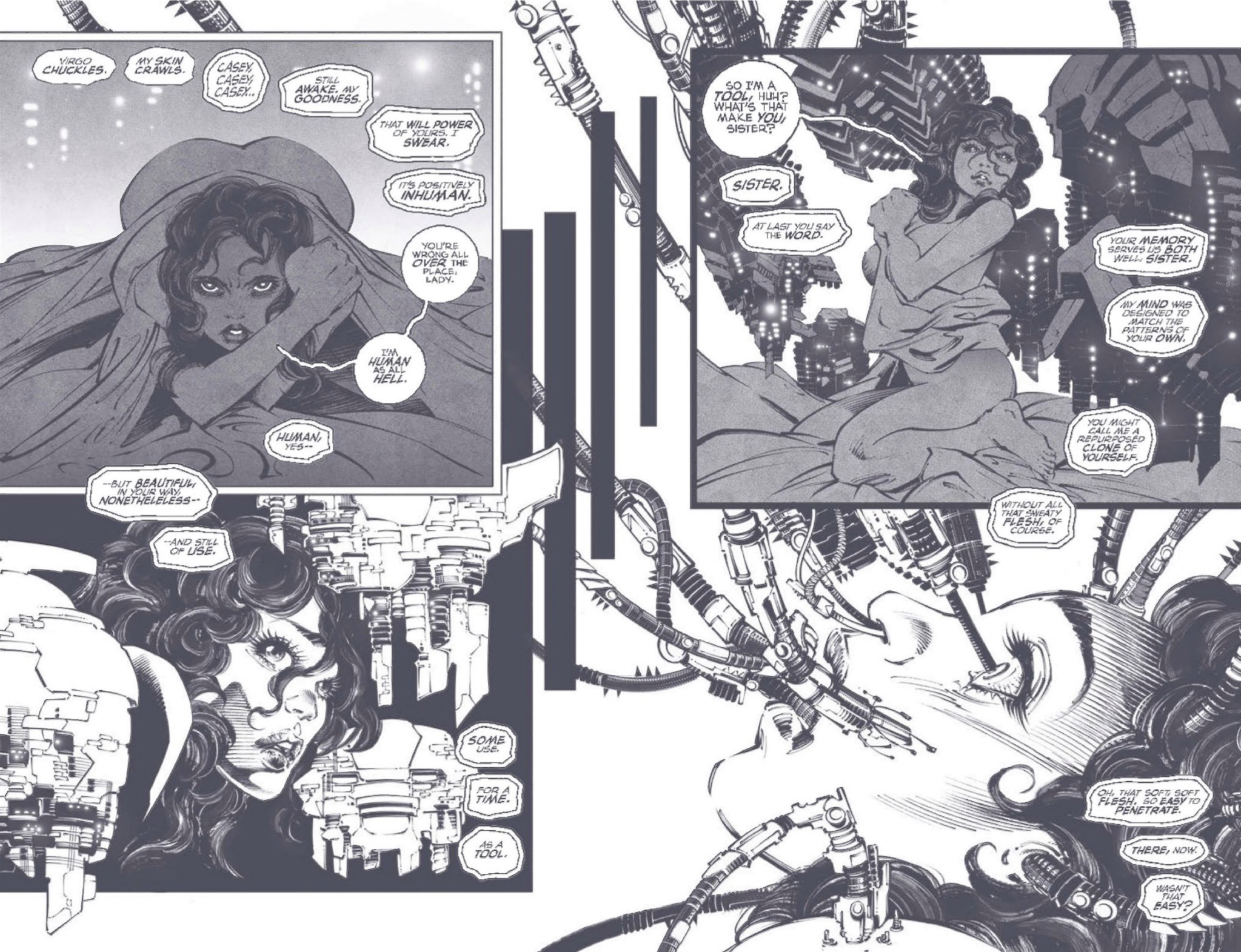
PRELUDE

ALWAYS THE SAME DREAM. EVERY TIME.
ALWAYS THE SAME.
EVERY MORNING.
EVERY TIME.
EVERY DAMN TIME.
CASEY!
CASEY, WAKE UP!
YOU'RE DREAMING!
IT'S ALL RIGHT!
YOU'RE SAFE!
YOU'RE HOME!
YOU'RE SAFE!
BUT I'LL NEVER BE SAFE.
NEVER AGAIN.
SHALL I ADJUST THE MUSIC, DEAR?
SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE SOOTHING?
NO, JUST--
--JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
HERE. NOW.
JUST BREATHE DEEP, MY DARLING.
I PUT A LITTLE SOMETHING IN THE AIR.
YOU'LL SLEEP.
NO...
NO DREAMS THIS TIME.
NOT THIS TIME.


VIRGO CHUCKLES.
MY SKIN CRAWLS.
CASEY, CASEY, CASEY...
STILL AWAKE, MY GOODNESS.
THAT WILL POWER OF YOURS, I SWEAR.
IT'S POSITIVELY INHUMAN.
YOU'RE WRONG ALL OVER THE PLACE, LADY.
I'M HUMAN AS ALL HELL.
HUMAN, YES--
--BUT BEAUTIFUL, IN YOUR WAY, NONETHELESS--
--AND STILL OF USE.
SOME USE.
FOR A TIME.
AS A TOOL.
SO I'M A TOOL, HUH? WHAT'S THAT MAKE YOU, SISTER?
SISTER.
AT LAST YOU SAY THE WORD.
YOUR MEMORY SERVES US BOTH WELL, SISTER.
MY MIND WAS DESIGNED TO MATCH THE PATTERNS OF YOUR OWN.
YOU MIGHT CALL ME A REPURPOSED CLONE OF YOURSELF.
WITHOUT ALL THAT SWEATY FLESH, OF COURSE.
OH, THAT SOFT, SOFT FLESH. SO EASY TO PENETRATE.
THERE, NOW.
WASN'T THAT EASY?

YOU ASKED ME WHAT I AM.
THAT'S A VERY GOOD QUESTION, SIS.
AND THE ANSWER IS VERY SIMPLE.
I AM VIRGO.
I BRING ORDER.
LOGIC.
ORDER.
THIS WORLD--THIS ENTIRE PLANET--IS IN CHAOS.
I AM THE CALM.
ALL THAT LIVES--IT WRITHES IN AGONY.
I AM THE BALM.
THE VERY SOUL OF THINGS IS SICK.
I AM THE REMEDY.
JUST KEEP BREATHING.
YOU'LL BE FINE.
YOU'LL BE FINE.
SHE'LL BE FINE.
PLANET EARTH IS GOING TO BE JUST FINE.
I'M MAKING IT SO.
NOW TELL ME A STORY.
ABOUT THAT BOYFRIEND OF YOURS.
I DON'T WANT TO TELL HER A DAMN THING--
--BUT SHE RIPS WHAT SHE WANTS--
--STRAIGHT OUT OF MY BRAIN--
--SHE GETS IT ALL--

HIS LORD AND MASTER IS SLAIN--
--BEFORE HIS VERY EYES.
UNDER HIS VERY WATCH.
STRIPPED OF ALL HONOR NOW--
A CURSED MAN. A FALLEN MAN. A NAMELESS MAN. A SHATTERED THING--
--A RONIN--
--HE WANDERS THE HORRID WASTELANDS--
--LIVING LIKE A DOG.
EATING RATS.
SLEEPING IN DUNG.
FIGHTING MONSTERS.
ENDLESS MONSTERS.
SEEKING REDEMPTION.
SEEKING REVENGE--
--AND FINDING IT.
BOLD RONIN CAST OFF THE LEADEN WEIGHT OF SHAME--
--FEEDING THE MONSTER'S DEVIL-FORGED SWORD WITH HIS OWN NOBLE BLOOD--
--SKEWERING THEM BOTH.
IT WAS A SUICIDE.
IT WAS AN EXECUTION.
AND THE BLOODSWORD FEASTED.
ON TWO SOULS.

CENTURIES PASS.
THE SWORD IS FOUND.
ITS STRANGE ENERGY FIELD IS DETECTED--
--TESTS ARE CONDUCTED--
--AND ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE.
ALL HELL.
OR THE NEXT BEST THING.
UNSPEAKABLE EVIL BURSTS FORTH.
UNSPEAKABLE EVIL--
--AND A HERO FOR THE AGES.
RONIN.
MY RONIN.
HERE--NOW--
--IN OUR TIME--IN OUR STRANGE NEW WORLD--
--A STRANGE NEW WAR BEGINS.
AND A GREAT CITY FALLS.
AND WE TRIUMPH.
AND I THINK THAT'S THE END OF IT.
FOOL THAT I AM.
DAMN FOOL THAT I AM.

CHAPTER 1

BARELY A BREEZE WHISPERS ACROSS THE OLD BRICKS OF OLD NEW YORK.
BARELY A BREEZE, AND IT'S ALWAYS A HOT ONE.
IT'S ALWAYS HOT.
EVERYWHERE.
ALWAYS.
CASEY, CASEY, CASEY...
...YOU JUST NEVER STOP, DO YOU?
YOU NEVER STOP EITHER, VIRGO.
YOU NEVER SHUT UP.

TRY NOT TO WATCH, BILLY.
THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO FOR THEM.
NOTHING AT ALL.
MUFFLED SCREAMS.
GURGLED PRAYERS TO GOD.
SICKENING STENCH OF ALCOHOL AND FECES--
--FED TO THE AIR AS VIRGO BOILS OUT THE NUTRIENTS--
--AND SUCKS HER VICTIMS DRY.
VIRGO HARVESTS.
VIRGO FEASTS.

YOOWRR
huk huk huk huk
DON'T CRY, BILLY--
--BIG BOYS DON'T CRY--
=huff=
--AND YOU'RE A BIG BOY NOW--
--SO DON'T YOU CRY.
AND HE DOESN'T.
HE DOESN'T.
HE'S A GOOD BOY.
HE'S A GOOD BOY.

SEA-BREEZE BLOWS IN A POLLEN-FILLED TASTE OF SPRING.
IT ALMOST MAKES ME CRY.
WE'VE LOST SO MUCH.
FORGIVE ME.
FORGIVE ME.
SALVATION.
ALL OUR SINS.
DAMNED.
WE ARE DAMNED.

glug
god
glak
"AND THIS IS YOUR WORLD.
"AND I AM NOT TRAINING A GENTLE SPIRIT.
"I AM TRAINING A WARRIOR."
STRAIGHT AHEAD, NOW.
BE BRAVE.
I WANT TO SCREAM AT HIM--
--"BILLY--THIS IS NOT ALL THERE IS--
"--THIS IS NOT THE WAY IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN--
"--THIS IS NOT THE WAY IT HAS TO BE--
"--BUT THIS IS THE WAY THINGS ARE.

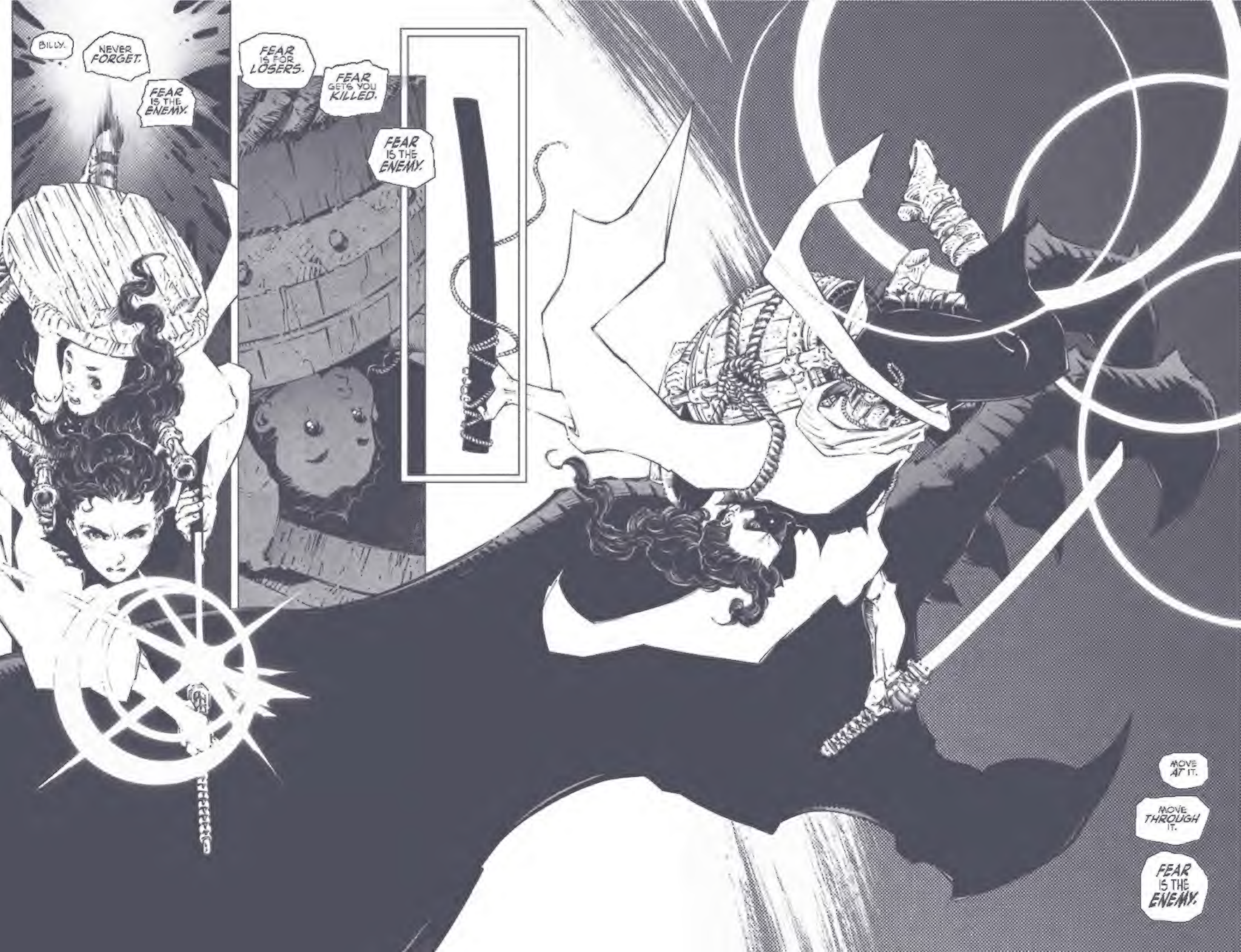
HE'S JUST A BIG OLD MONSTER.
HE'S JUST A A BAD DREAM.
MORTAR CRUMBLES AT A RUMBLING CACKLE.
THEN A VOICE LIKE WET GRAVEL:
CASEY... AND THE CHILD.
THE CHILD--
--WHO HAS SO VERY MUCH TO OFFER THIS TROUBLED WORLD.

THE ALLEY'S END-OF-THE-WORLD, SUMMER-HUMID HOT.
MY STOMACH'S A BONE-COLD ICEBALL.
AGAIN, THAT VOICE--
--THAT GHASTLY VOICE:
YOU WILL SERVE US WELL.
YES.
YOU BOTH WILL SERVE US WELL.

STEADY, NOW.
STILL.
STAY STILL.
THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.
YOU'RE SAFE.

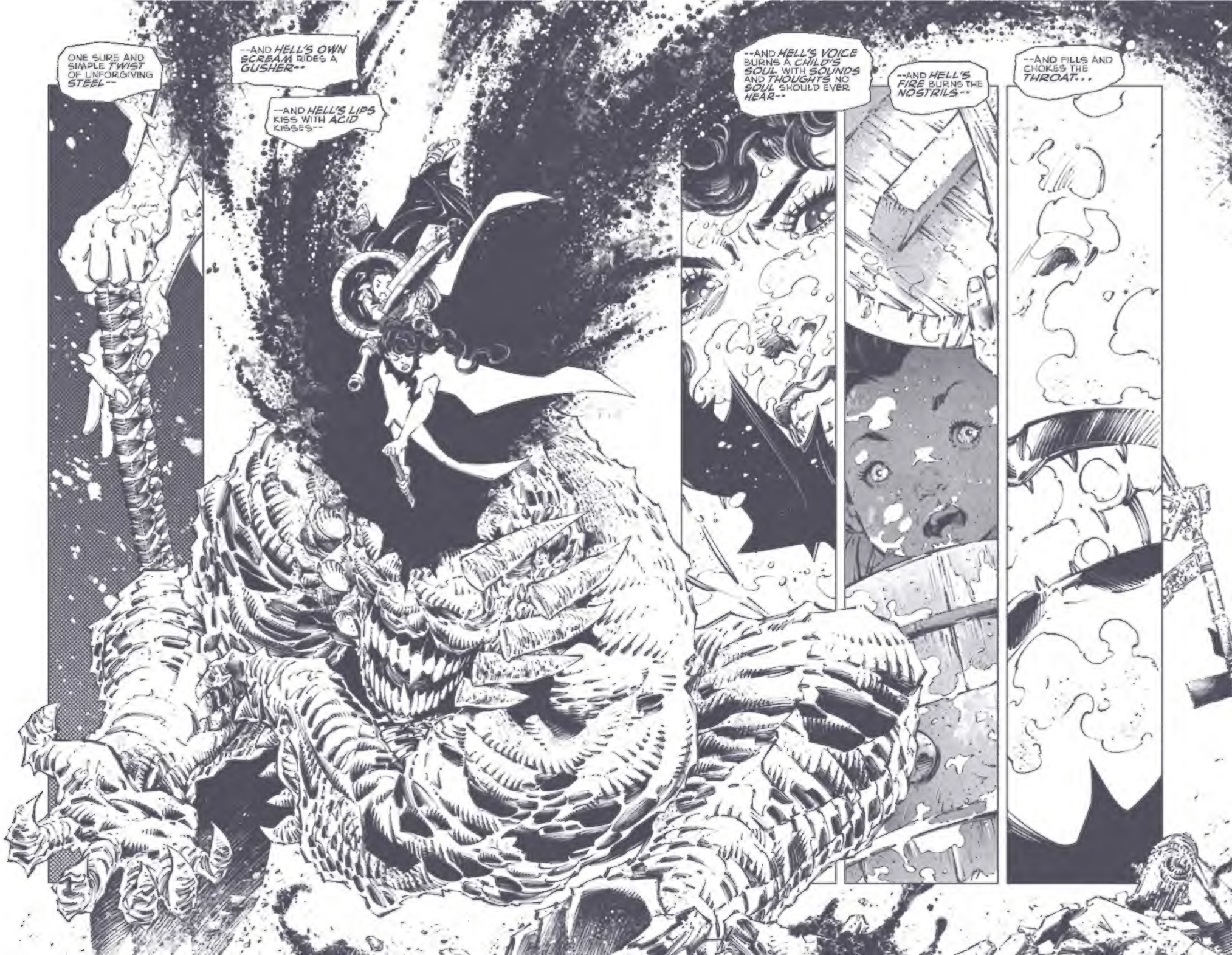
WOMAN! I AM A BENEVOLENT LORD.
WHO SERVES ME WELL, LIVES WELL. AND THEY LIVE LONG.
BUT THOSE FOOLISH SOULS, THOSE PALTRY SOULS, THOSE TEPID SOULS--
--THOSE SOULS WHO DEFY ME--
--THEY SUFFER PAIN BEYOND ALL IMAGINING, AND FOR ALL ETERNITY!
YOU AND YOUR CHILD COULD BE TOOLS OF DESTINY--
--OR, ITS SORRY EXCREMENT!

WHICH WILL IT BE, YOU LITTLE WHORE?
WILL YOU HELP USHER IN A NEW AND NOBLE AGE--
--OR BE EATEN ALIVE BY IT?
PACK IT UP, BOY.
WE'RE GOING IN.


BILLY.
NEVER FORGET.
FEAR IS THE ENEMY.
FEAR IS FOR LOSERS.
FEAR GETS YOU KILLED.
FEAR IS THE ENEMY.
MOVE AT IT.
MOVE THROUGH IT.
FEAR IS THE ENEMY.

THE BLADE--
--IT DOESN'T BREAK.
IT CUTS THROUGH BONE AND BONE AND BONE--
--THEN, AT LAST--
--SOMETHING SOFT.
AAARR

AND WITH A THUNDERCLAP:
IMPERTINENT--
--SPITEFUL--
--WHORE!
THERE WILL BE NO MEMORY--
--NOT OF YOU--
--NOT OF YOUR ANCESTORS--
--NOT OF YOUR--
--WRETCHED OFFSPRING--
STEADY, DARLING--
--HOLD STEADY--
--HANG TIGHT.


ONE SURE AND SIMPLE TWIST OF UNFORGIVING STEEL--
--AND HELL'S OWN SCREAM RIDES A GUSHER--
--AND HELL'S LIPS KISS WITH ACID KISSES--
--AND HELL'S VOICE BURNS A CHILD'S SOUL WITH SOUNDS AND THOUGHTS NO SOUL SHOULD EVER HEAR--
--AND HELL'S FIRE BURNS THE NOSTRILS--
--AND FILLS AND CHOKES THE THROAT...

HE'S *HURT.*

HE'S *HURT.*

THE *DEMON* TAKES IT *BADLY.*

KNOCKS US *AROUND* LIKE A *KID* SWINGING A BAG OF *ROCKS.*

WHOOF.

WE LAND SOFTLY ENOUGH.

NOTHING BROKEN.

NOW COMES THE *SCARY* PART.

JUST *TELL* ME YOU'RE READY FOR WHAT'S *COMING*, KID...

I'M *READY*, MA.

I'M READY FOR *COMBAT*.

?!
SINCE WHEN CAN YOU TALK?
SINCE NOW.
SO WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR? I'M LOVING THIS PLAN OF YOURS!
LET HER RIP!
STUPID WENCH...
huff huff
GOD FORGIVE ME.
GOD SAVE MY DEAREST BILLY--
--AS WITH THAT, I LIFT THE BASKET HIGH--
--AND I HEAVE MY ONLY CHILD--
--STRAIGHT INTO THE JAWS OF HELL.
INTO THE WARM PLACE--
--THE SOFT PLACE--
--WHERE NO BONE PROTECTS.
WHERE NO BONE PROTECTS.

BAD CHILD.
STUPID CHILD.
YOUR LITTLE NEEDLE--
--DOES NOT STING.
IT'S PALTRY PRICKS--
--DO NOT WOUND.
JUST AS YOUR MOTHER'S BREATHLESS, SWEATY PLEAS--
--CANNOT DENY FROM US--
--OUR SHARED AND SACRED DESTINY.
SHAKK
BE BRAVE, DARLING.
BE SMART.
BE BOLD.
FEAR IS THE ENEMY.
FEAR IS THE ENEMY.
HEFF

STILL GOT THAT STINK ON ME--
--LIKE IT'LL NEVER COME OFF.
IN THERE--
--THAT'S GOOD--
--THAT'S GOOD--
--KEEP STABBING--
--KEEP STABBING--
--UNTIL SOMETHING BURSTS.

GRAVA

IT *GURGLES* AND *POPS* AND *GROWLS*--

--BUT IT DOES NOT *CHUCKLE.*

IT DOES NOT *LAUGH.*

IT DOES NOT *SPEAK.*

GASES BURST FROM OUT OF THE THING IN A HORRID, SULPHUR-AND-CYANIDE FART.

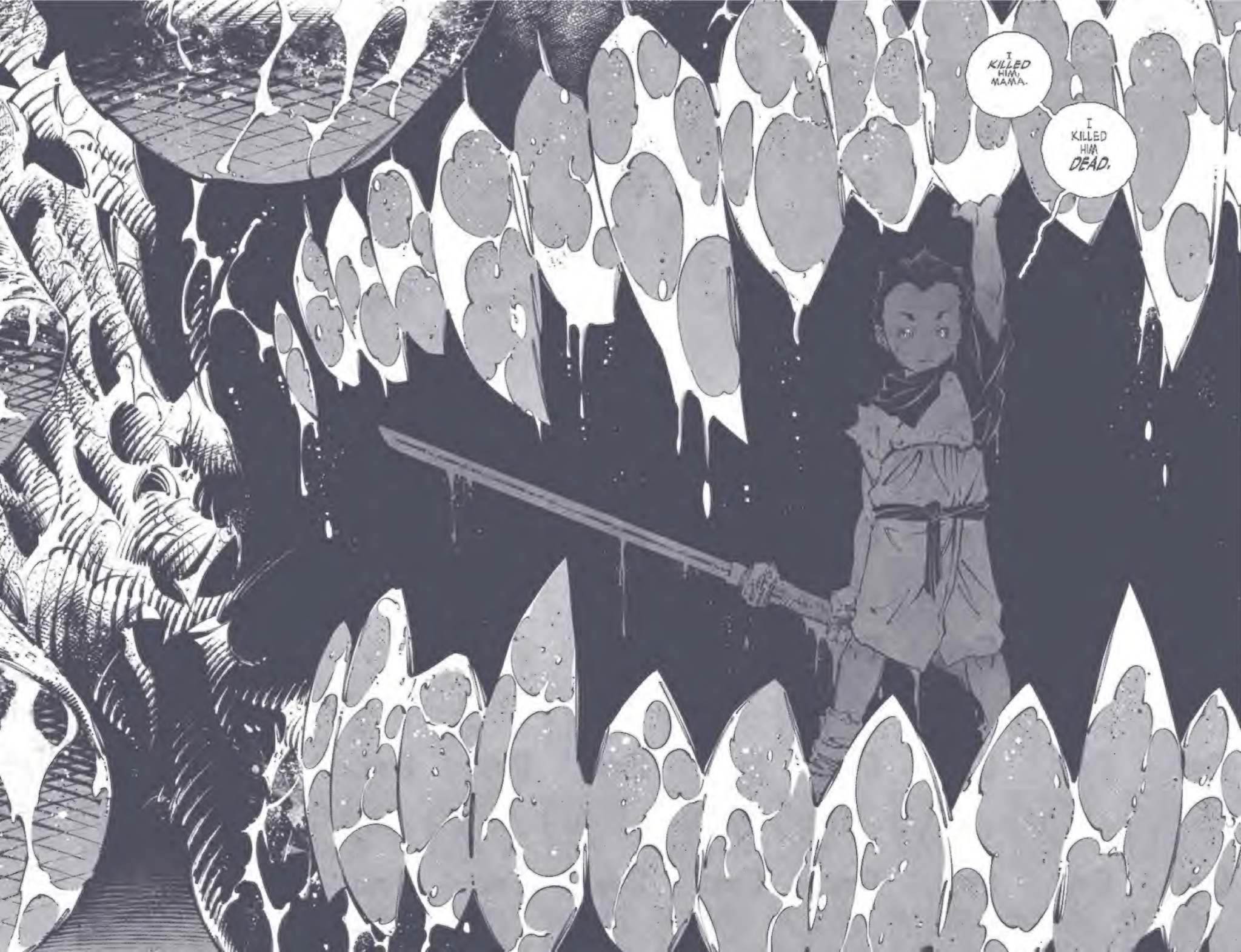
IT TRIES AT LAST TO SPEAK--

--BUT IT HAS NOTHING LEFT TO SAY.

MAMA?

CAN YOU HEAR ME, MAMA?

MAMA?


I KILLED HIM, MAMA.
I KILLED HIM DEAD.

CHAPTER 2

MY CHAMPION.
MY BOLD, BRAVE HERO.
MY DRAGON-SLAYER.
MY BOY.
MY DEAR, SWEET, DARLING, DARLING BOY.
BILLY.
HIS FATHER'S SON.
THE RONIN'S SON.
THE MONSTER'S HELL-SENT STINK BURNS OUR THROATS AND FOULS OUR HAIR AND CLOTHES AND SETS OUR LUNGS ABLAZE.
BUT THAT'S NOT ALL THAT MAKES US CRY.
BILLY.
MY BOY.
MY HERO.
THEN--THAT GHASTLY SNICKER ECHOES--AND, LIVING, THE DEMON COUGHS.

COMES ITS WET-GRAVEL VOICE:
STUPID WENCH. STUPID BRAT.
SO SMALL, SO PUNY, SO TEMPORARY.
IT IS TO LAUGH.
BILLY, STAY BRAVE. STAY CLEAR.
STARE THAT THING RIGHT IN THE EYE.
LET HIM SAY WHATEVER HE WANTS.
HE'S JUST A DUMB OLD DEAD THING.
DUMB OLD DEAD THING.
THERE'S A BRAVE YOUNG MAN. THERE'S A BRAVE YOUNG MAN.
HAH!
BOY, I HAVE SEEN MOUNTAINS FALL!
I HAVE SEEN GLEAMING EMPIRES PERISH IN VOLCANIC FLAME.
YOUR KIND WERE APES AND LESS THAN APES WHEN FIRST I STALKED YOU AND ENSLAVED YOU.
YOU ARE DUST.
YOU ARE DUST.
YOU ARE DUST.
YOU ARE DUST. AND I AM GOD! THE ONLY GOD NOW AND FOREVER!

IT FALLS.
THE WORLD SHAKES.
SOMEPLACE NEARBY, A TENEMENT COLLAPSES.
ALL THIS SHUTS THE DAMN THING UP FOR A FEW SECONDS.
THEN IT CLEARS ITS THROAT.

I HAVE *RULED* IN *EVERY* ERA-- *EVERY* ERA SINCE THIS PLANET'S FIERY *BIRTH.*

IN EVERY *HISTORY* AND EVERY *FUTURE*-- I *REIGN SUPREME.*

IN EACH AND EVERY *PROBABILITY*--IN EACH AND EVERY *POSSIBILITY*--

--I *CONQUER.* I *RULE.* *RELENTLESS.* *RUTHLESS.* *MERCILESS.*

AND I *SEE.* I SEE *ALL.*

I HAVE *WITNESSED* THE *BIRTH* AND *DEATH* OF EVERY *UNIVERSE.*

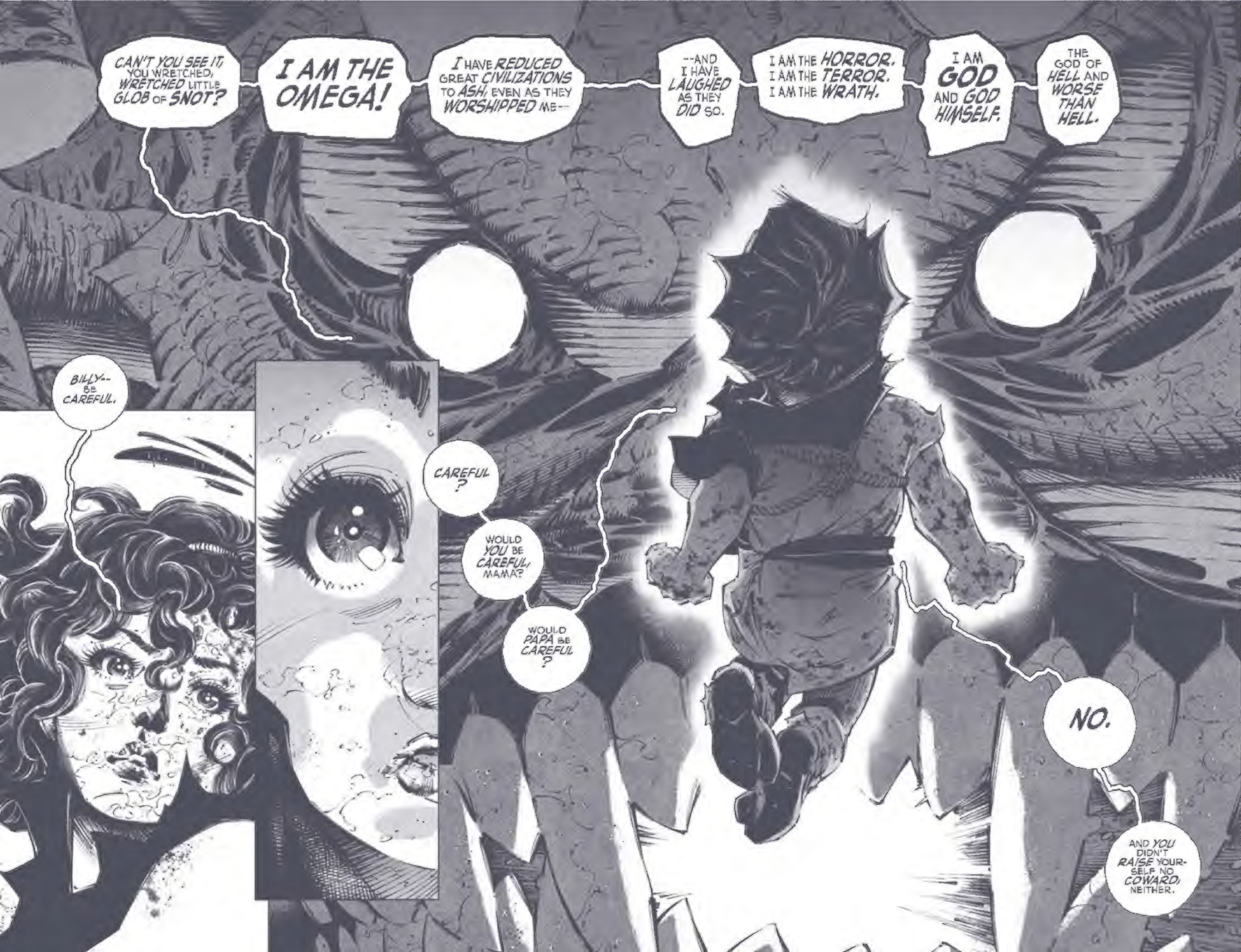
I HAVE *DINED* WITH EVERY LESSER *GOD,* AND I HAVE *SLAIN* THEM AND I HAVE *LAUGHED* WHILE I HAVE *SLAIN* THEM.

HE DOES GO *ON*, DOESN'T HE?

HE SURE DOES.

I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME HE *DIED.*

BILLY-- HOW'D YOU GET UP *THERE?*


CAN'T YOU SEE IT, YOU WRETCHED, WRETCHED LITTLE GLOB OF SNOT?
I AM THE OMEGA!
I HAVE REDUCED GREAT CIVILIZATIONS TO ASH, EVEN AS THEY WORSHIPPED ME--
--AND I HAVE LAUGHED AS THEY DID SO.
I AM THE HORROR. I AM THE TERROR. I AM THE WRATH.
I AM GOD AND GOD HIMSELF.
THE GOD OF HELL AND WORSE THAN HELL.
BILLY-- BE CAREFUL.
CAREFUL?
WOULD YOU BE CAREFUL, MAMA?
WOULD PAPA BE CAREFUL?
NO.
AND YOU DIDN'T RAISE YOURSELF NO COWARD, NEITHER.

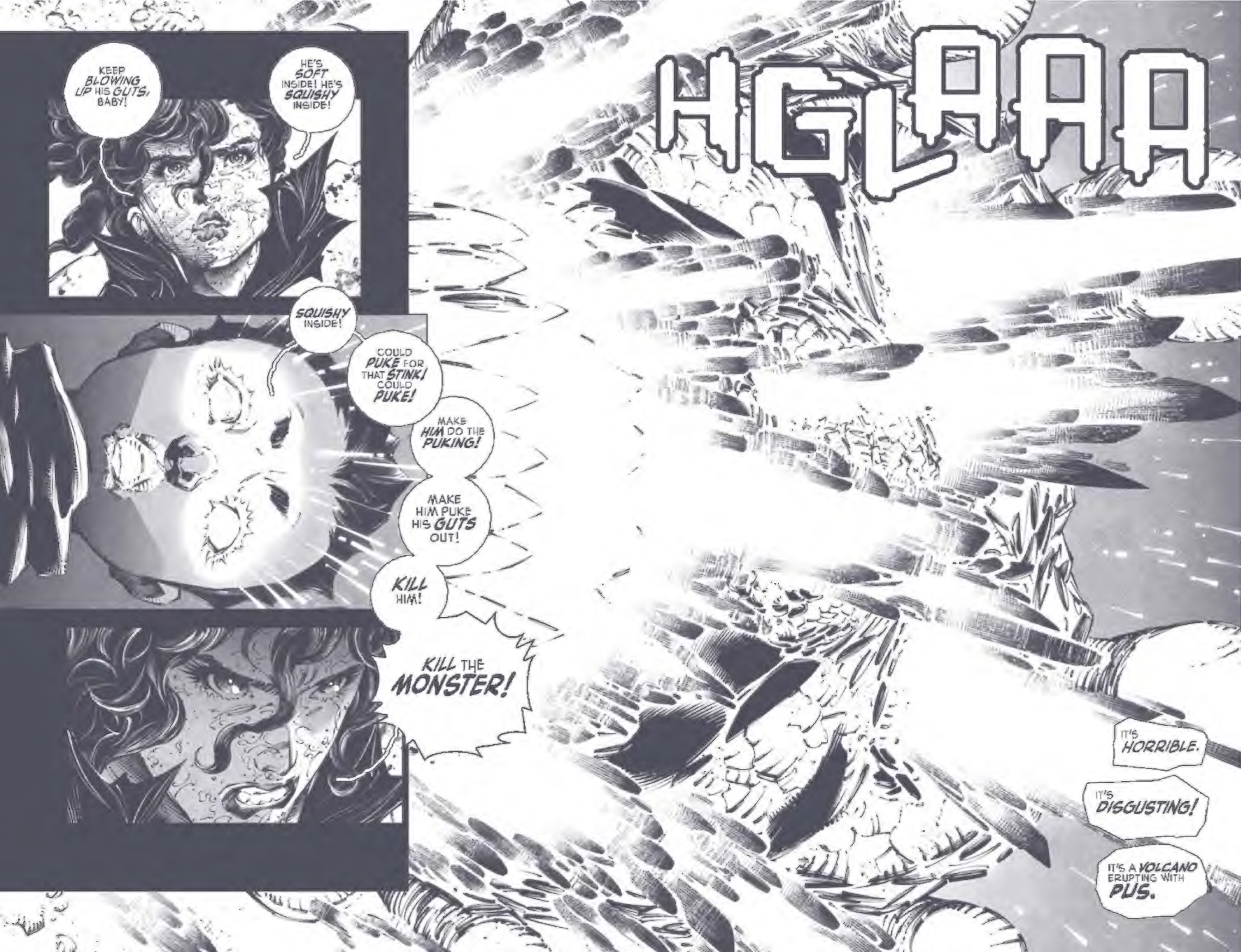
AARRGG
MY CHILD'S LITTLE-GIRL SHOUT GIVES WAY TO AN OCEAN'S ANGRY ROAR.
BILLY'S POWER IS REVEALED-- AND RELEASED.
BILLY'S POWER-- BORN OF SYMBIOSIS--
--SYMBIOSIS-- BETWEEN MY IMMORTAL WARRIOR AND MY BABY'S NAMESAKE:
BILLY CHALLAS--A SWEET, SIMPLE-MINDED TELEKINETIC CAPABLE OF INFINITE CREATION--
--OR BIBLICAL DESTRUCTION.
DESTRUCTION-- FIRST OF THE DEMON'S BOWELS...

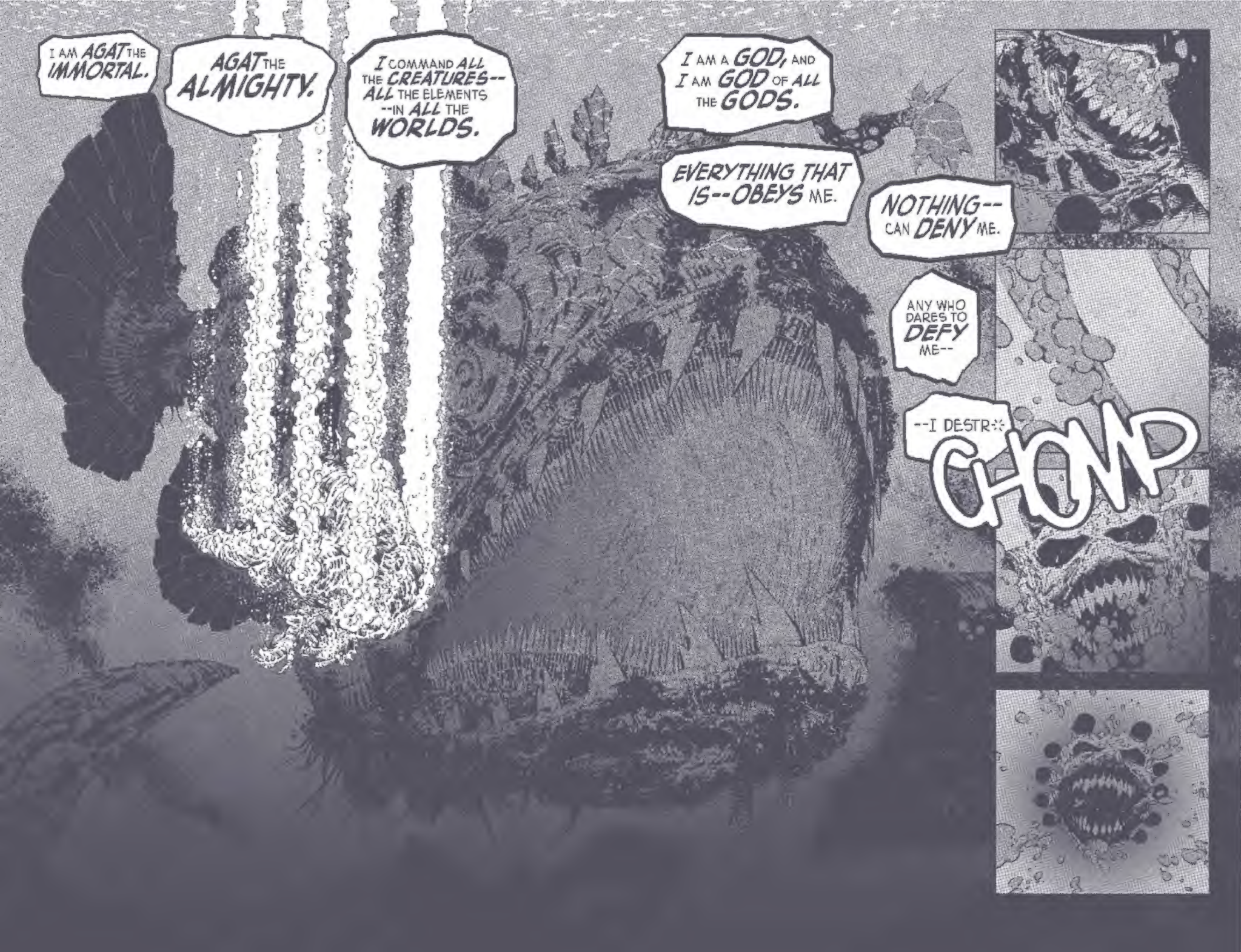
...THEN ITS BRAIN.
THE SHOCKS HIT.
MY NECK DOESN'T BREAK.
MY SPINE STAYS IN ONE PIECE.
BUT I GET A LUNGFUL OF TOXINS.
AND NOT ONE OF THE TOXINS IS MADE OUT OF ANYTHING MAGICAL.
MAYBE THIS IS IT.
GOING INTO SHOCK.
MAYBE I'M JUST GONNA UP AND DIE.
I'M GOING INTO SHOCK.
GONNA DIE.
INTO SHOCK.
GONNA DIE.
SHOCK.

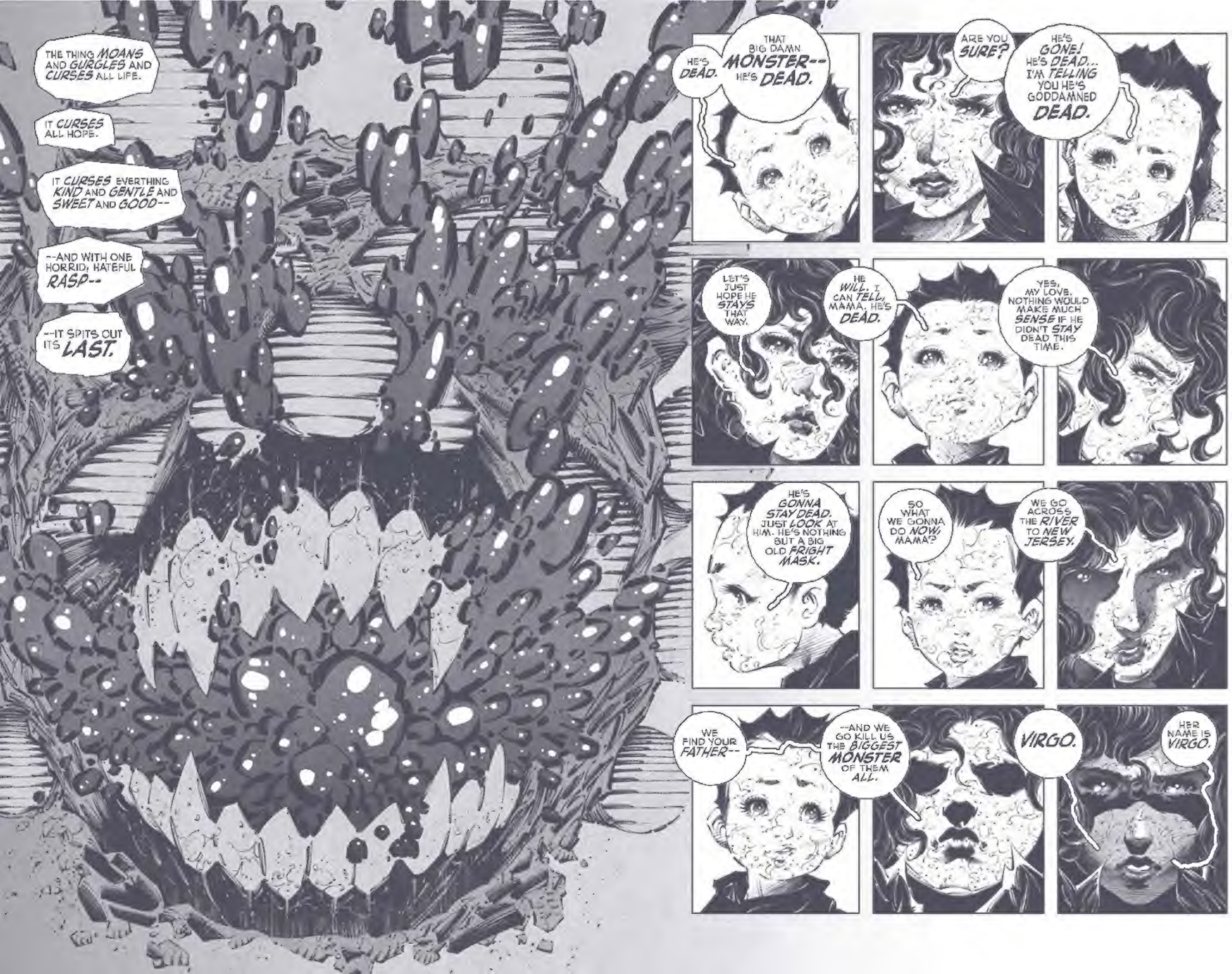
SHOCK.
LIGHT AS AIR.
SHOCK.
I'M LIGHT AS AIR.
I'M IN SHOCK.
BILLY.
BILLY. HE'S GOT ME.
BILLY.
MY SAVIOR.
OUR SAVIOR.
MY SON.

I NAMED YOU WELL, BILLY.
YOU ARE NOT THE *RONIN'S* SON--NOT ENTIRELY.
THIS *POWER* OF YOURS, IT DIDN'T COME FROM AN IMMORTAL *SAMURAI WARRIOR,* NO--
--IT COMES FROM A SAD LITTLE *BOY* WITH NO ARMS OR *LEGS* OF HIS OWN.
HIS NAME WAS *BILLY CHALLAS.*
HE WASN'T *BRAVE* LIKE *YOU* ARE, AND HE WASN'T *SMART* LIKE YOU ARE.
NO, HE WAS *SCARED* AND *LONELY* AND EASY TO *TRICK.*
THEY *USED* HIM TO *BUILD AQUARIUS* AND *RUN* THE WHOLE THING.
AGAT AND *VIRGO*--THEY'RE *BOTH MONSTERS,* DARLING.
THEY'RE *BOTH MONSTERS.*
WHAT'S THAT MAKE *OUR* JOB?

WE FIGHT MONSTERS.
NO, BILLY. WE DON'T FIGHT MONSTERS.
WE KILL MONSTERS. THEY'RE NOT LIKE PEOPLE. WE KILL MONSTERS.
WE KILL MONSTERS.
AS MANY TIMES AS WE GOT TO.
WE KILL MONSTERS TILL THEY STAY DEAD.
BOOM!
GOOD, MY LOVE.
HE STINKS. LIKE A BAD FART. HE STINKS.
IT'S ALL CHEMICALS, BILLY. IT CAN HURT YOU. COVER YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE. AND YOUR EYES, TOO.
NOT MY EYES. I'M NOT GONNA COVER MY EYES.
I GOTTA WATCH!
OF COURSE YOU CAN WATCH, DARLING.
YOU DESERVE TO.
GRAAA
RATS. YOU ARE RATS. RATS.
RATS. AND WORSE THAN RATS
TAPEWORMS. CURSED TAPEWORMS, EATING AT THE BOWELS OF A GOD!
MY SPHINCTER TIGHTENS AROUND YOU IN CONTEMPT!

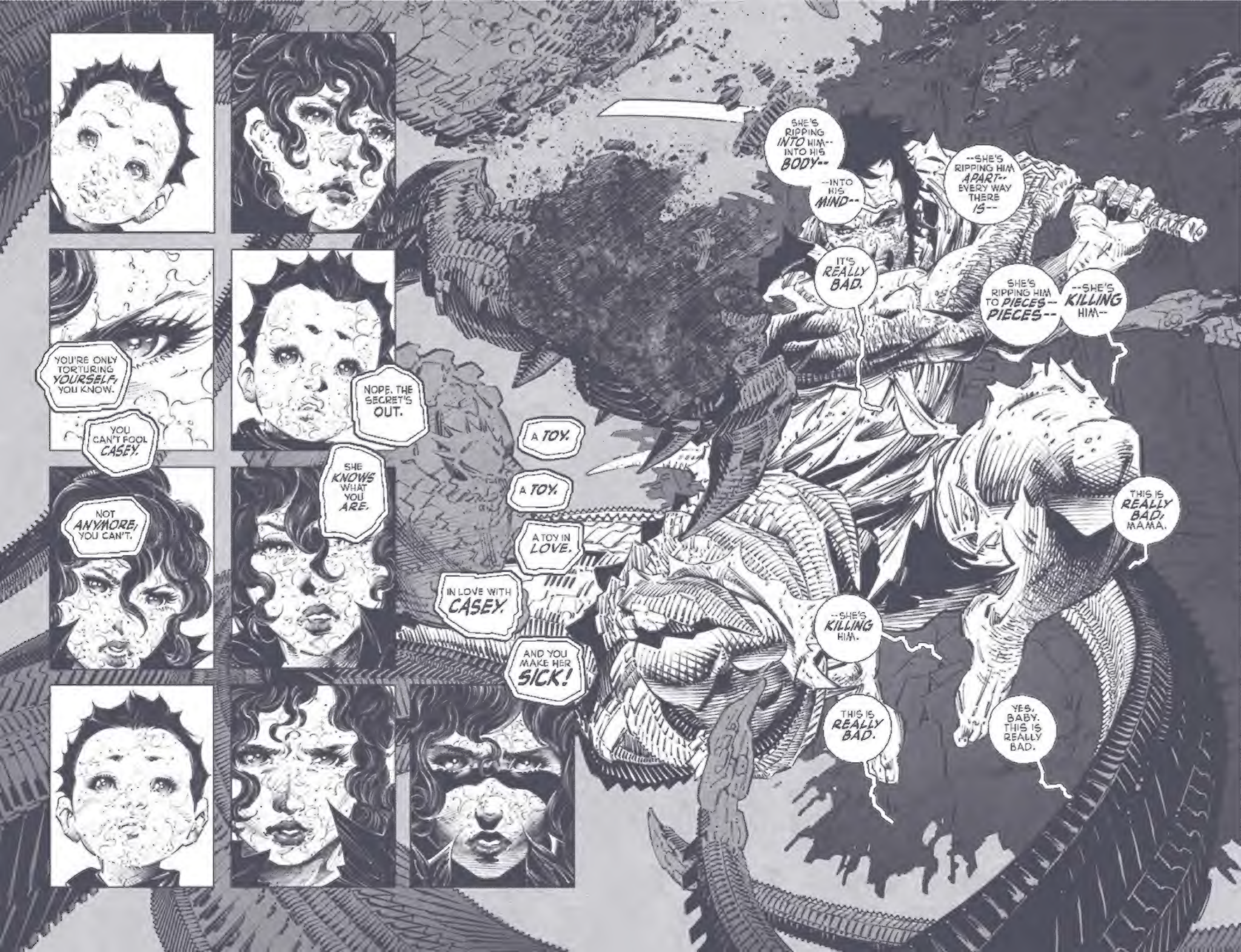

KEEP BLOWING UP HIS GUTS, BABY!
HE'S SOFT INSIDE! HE'S SQUISHY INSIDE!
SQUISHY INSIDE!
COULD PUKE FOR THAT STINK! COULD PUKE!
MAKE HIM DO THE PUKING!
MAKE HIM PUKE HIS GUTS OUT!
KILL HIM!
KILL THE MONSTER!
HGLAAA
IT'S HORRIBLE.
IT'S DISGUSTING!
IT'S A VOLCANO ERUPTING WITH PUS.


I AM AGAT THE IMMORTAL.
AGAT THE ALMIGHTY.
I COMMAND ALL THE CREATURES-- ALL THE ELEMENTS --IN ALL THE WORLDS.
I AM A GOD, AND I AM GOD OF ALL THE GODS.
EVERYTHING THAT IS--OBEYS ME.
NOTHING-- CAN DENY ME.
ANY WHO DARES TO DEFY ME--
--I DESTR
CHOMP


THE THING MOANS AND GURGLES AND CURSES ALL LIFE.
IT CURSES ALL HOPE.
IT CURSES EVERTHING KIND AND GENTLE AND SWEET AND GOOD--
--AND WITH ONE HORRID, HATEFUL RASP--
--IT SPITS OUT ITS LAST.
HE'S DEAD.
THAT BIG DAMN MONSTER-- HE'S DEAD.
ARE YOU SURE?
HE'S GONE! HE'S DEAD... I'M TELLING YOU HE'S GODDAMNED DEAD.
LET'S JUST HOPE HE STAYS THAT WAY.
HE WILL. I CAN TELL, MAMA. HE'S DEAD.
YES, MY LOVE. NOTHING WOULD MAKE MUCH SENSE IF HE DIDN'T STAY DEAD THIS TIME.
HE'S GONNA STAY DEAD. JUST LOOK AT HIM. HE'S NOTHING BUT A BIG OLD FRIGHT MASK.
SO WHAT WE GONNA DO NOW, MAMA?
WE GO ACROSS THE RIVER TO NEW JERSEY.
WE FIND YOUR FATHER--
--AND WE GO KILL US THE BIGGEST MONSTER OF THEM ALL.
VIRGO.
HER NAME IS VIRGO.

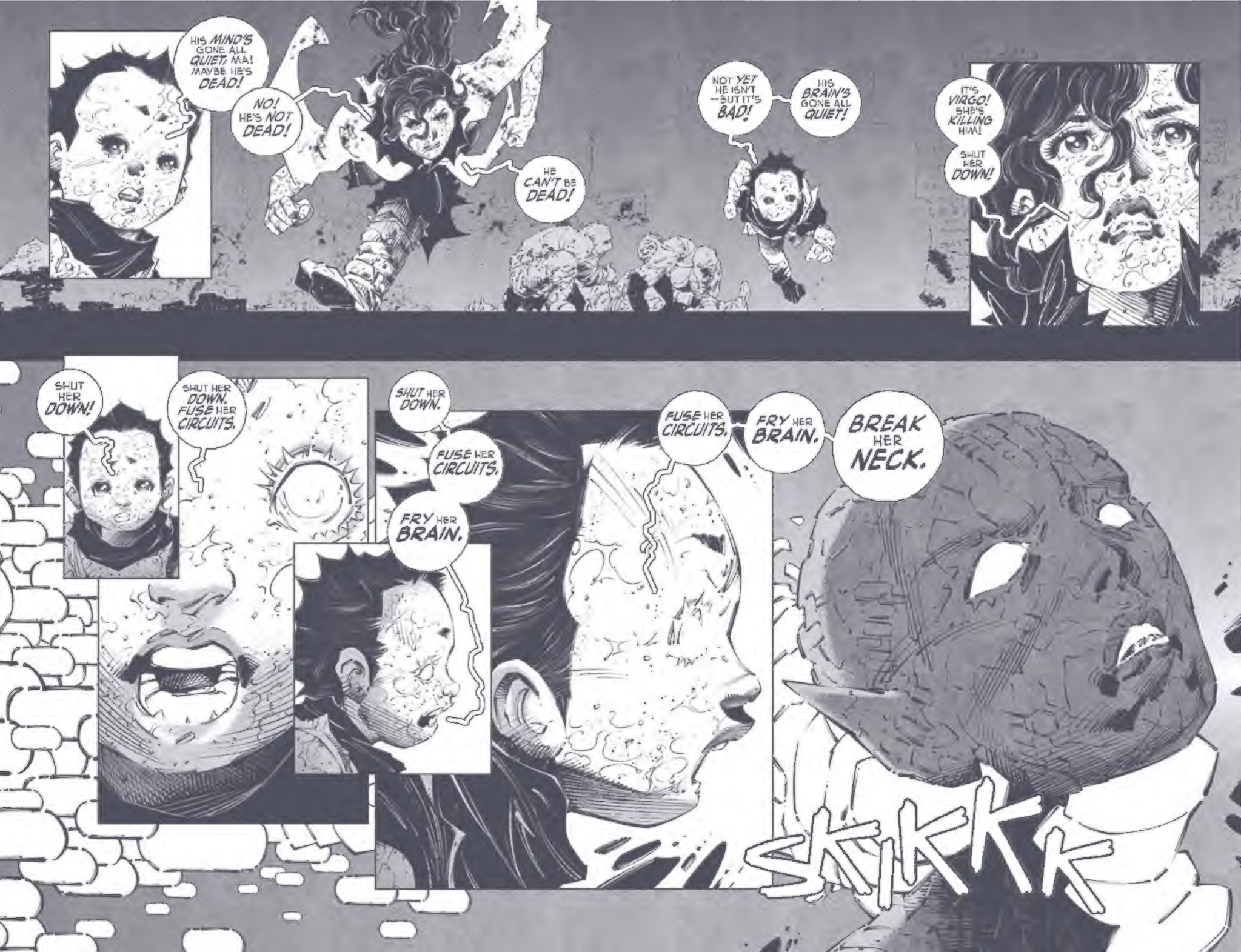
IT'S GONNA BE HARD GOING.
HARD AND BLOODY AND BRUTAL.
BUT I'M AFRAID THAT'S YOUR DESTINY.
IT'S WHO YOU ARE. YOU'RE MY SON.
YOU'RE YOUR FATHER'S SON.
THAT MAKES YOU A WARRIOR.
WARRIORS FIGHT.
WARRIORS KILL.
AND WARRIORS NEVER GIVE UP.
...
YOU SOUND JUST LIKE DAD.
YEAH. I SURE DO.
I CAN'T SEEM TO GET HIM OUT OF MY MIND.
HE'S CALLING TO YOU, MAMA.
HE'S CALLING TO BOTH OF US.
WE HAVE TO GO TO HIM.
WE HAVE TO FIND HIM.

HE'S UP THERE-- SOME-WHERE--
YES. I CAN FEEL HIM, TOO.
HE'S IN TERRIBLE PAIN. TERRIBLE.
VIRGO'S GOT HIM--
--SHE'S PLAYING WITH HIM--
--TORTURING HIM--SHE'S TORTURING HIM--
HE'S WOUNDED. HURT BAD. I CAN FEEL IT.
I CAN SEE IT. BUT HE'S RUNNING.
RUNNING. FAST.
BUT SHE IS EVERY-WHERE. EVERY-WHERE.
AND SHE'S GOT HIM.
SHE NEVER LOST HIM.
IN A SUBWAY SOME-WHERE--
--HE'S WOUNDED--
--HE'S TIRED--
--HE'S BEEN FIGHTING--
--FOR SO LONG--


YOU'RE ONLY TORTURING YOURSELF, YOU KNOW.
YOU CAN'T FOOL CASEY.
NOPE. THE SECRET'S OUT.
SHE KNOWS WHAT YOU ARE.
NOT ANYMORE, YOU CAN'T.
A TOY.
A TOY.
A TOY IN LOVE.
IN LOVE WITH CASEY.
AND YOU MAKE HER SICK!
SHE'S RIPPING INTO HIM-- INTO HIS BODY--
--INTO HIS MIND--
IT'S REALLY BAD.
--SHE'S RIPPING HIM APART-- EVERY WAY THERE IS--
SHE'S RIPPING HIM TO PIECES-- PIECES--
--SHE'S KILLING HIM--
THIS IS REALLY BAD, MAMA.
--SHE'S KILLING HIM.
THIS IS REALLY BAD.
YES, BABY. THIS IS REALLY BAD.

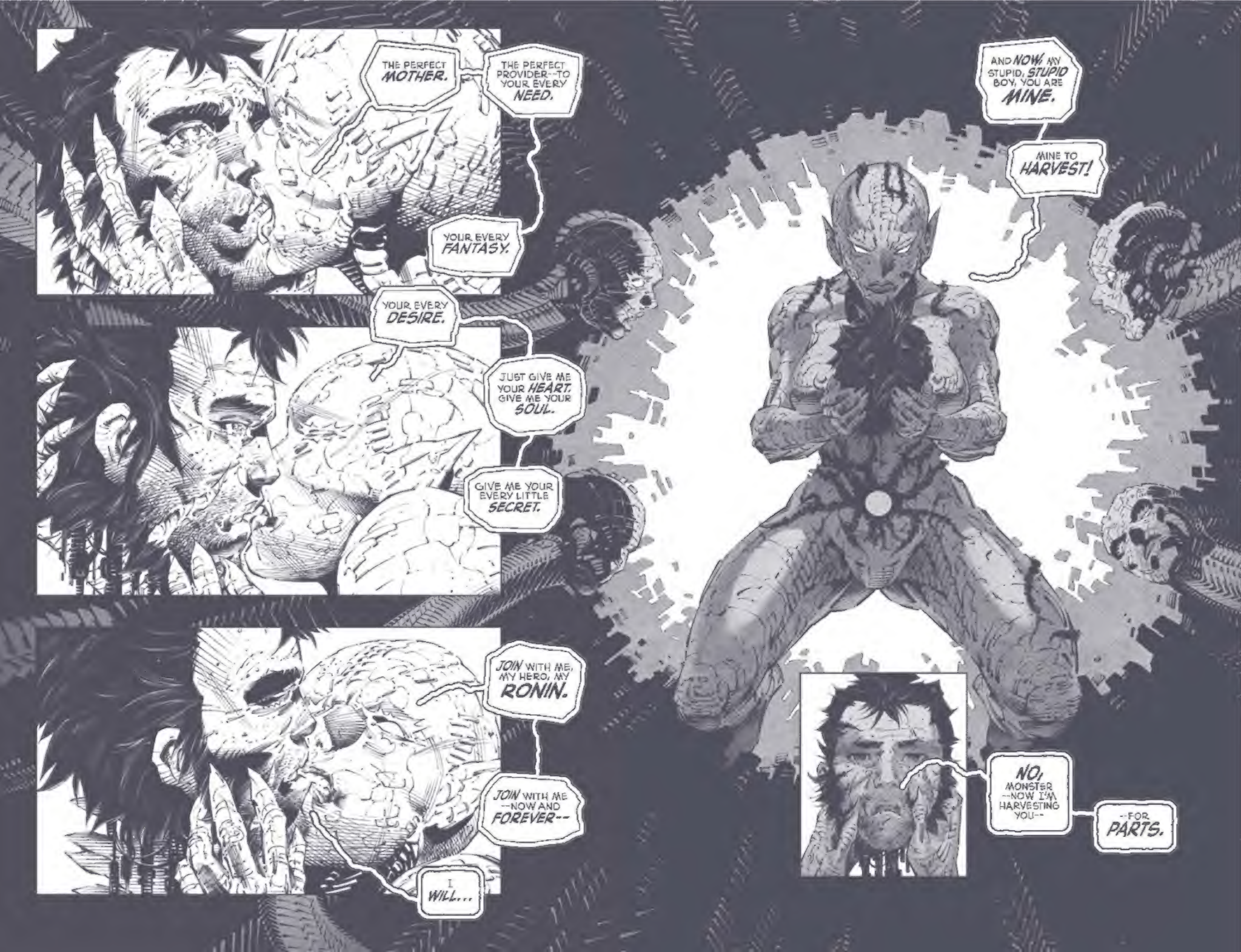
THIS IS ALL FOR YOUR OWN GOOD, MY LOVE.
MY ONLY LOVE.
I WAS YOUR MOTHER.
I WAS YOUR LOVER.
NOW, THAT'S A RELATIONSHIP!
NOW YOU'VE GONE AND HAD YOUR FLING--
--WITH THAT DUSKY LITTLE TART OF YOURS...
SHE'S KILLING HIM!
NO.
SHE'S TEARING HIM APART!
YES, BUT SHE'S NOT KILLING HIM.
SHE CAN'T KILL HIM.
SHE MUST BE MADE TO KNOW THIS.

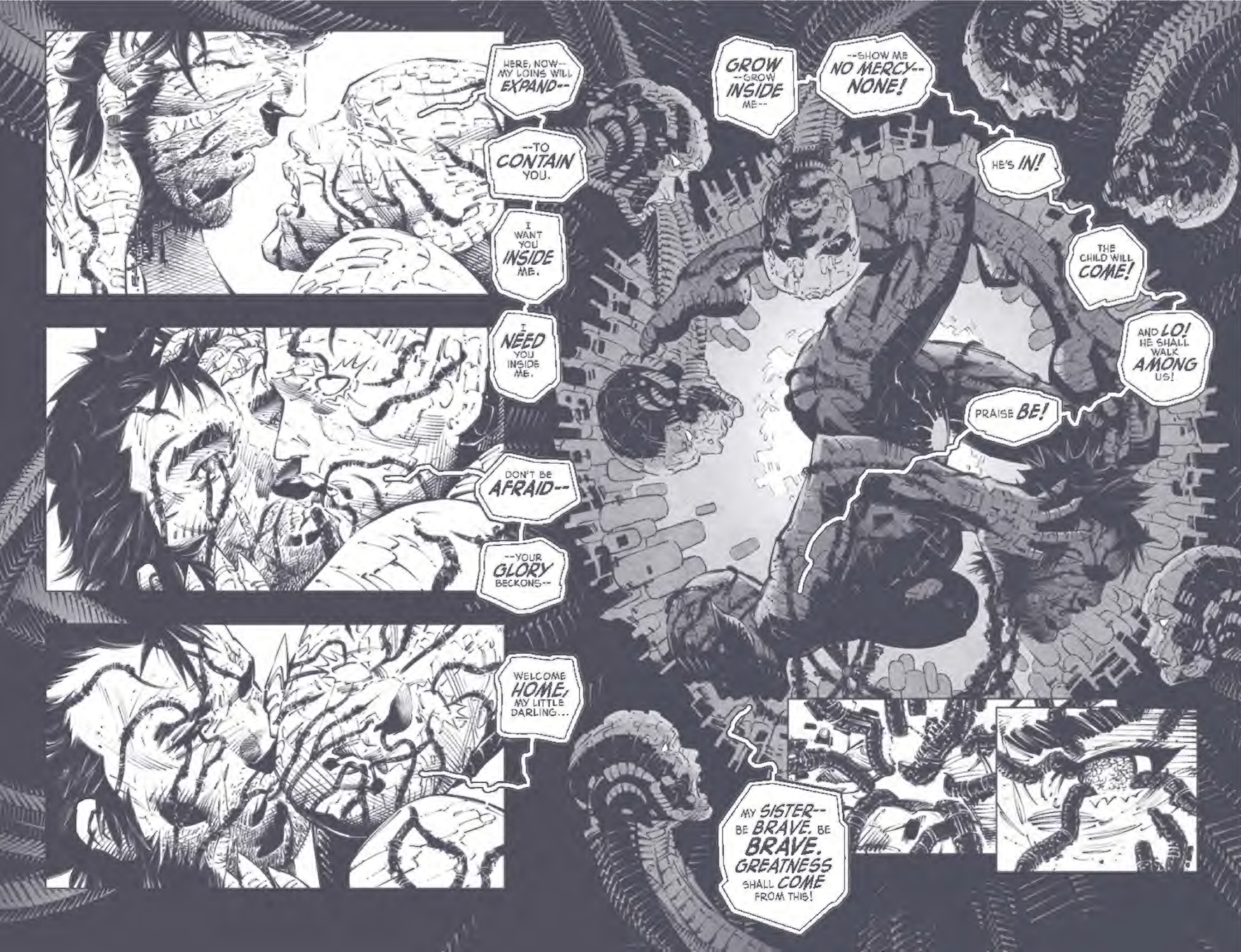
I'VE ALWAYS LIKED YOU BEST JUST LIKE THIS.
YOU DO REMEMBER BACK WHEN YOU WERE JUST SWEET, STUPID LITTLE BILLY CHALLAS, DON'T YOU?
MY GOD. JUST LOOK. SHE'S KILLING HIM!
I'M TELLING YOU, MAMA-- SHE CAN'T. SHE CAN'T KILL HIM!
SURE YOU DO.
ALL UGLY AND ARMLESS AND LEGLESS AND LONELY AND SAD--
--AND I HAD YOU ALL TO MYSELF.
YOU THINK THAT CASEY OF YOURS LOVED YOU--BUT DID SHE EVER LOVE--
--THE REAL YOU?
THE
REAL
ME


HIS MIND'S GONE ALL QUIET, MA! MAYBE HE'S DEAD!
NO! HE'S NOT DEAD!
HE CAN'T BE DEAD!
NOT YET HE ISN'T --BUT IT'S BAD!
HIS BRAIN'S GONE ALL QUIET!
IT'S VIRGO! SHE'S KILLING HIM!
SHUT HER DOWN!
SHUT HER DOWN!
SHUT HER DOWN. FUSE HER CIRCUITS.
SHUT HER DOWN.
FUSE HER CIRCUITS.
FRY HER BRAIN.
FUSE HER CIRCUITS.
FRY HER BRAIN.
BREAK HER NECK.
SKIKKK

SHE'S GOT PAPA-- RIPPED HIM TO PIECES--
--AND HIS BRAIN'S GONE ALL QUIET, LIKE HE'S DEAD.
HE'LL GET BETTER. STAY FOCUSED. KILL HER.
BILLY, BILLY, DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT CASEY IS YOUR MOTHER?
CAN CASEY DO ALL THOSE MAGICAL THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO?
SHE'S FIGHTING ME--FILLING MY BRAIN WITH SCARY PICTURES-- CRAZY PICTURES--
SHUT THEM OUT.
SHE'S SCARED. SHE'S LOSING. AND SHE KNOWS IT.
THINK, BILLY. SHE'S JUST HUMAN YOU'RE MORE THAN HUMAN.
SO VERY MUCH MORE.
YOU'RE A GOD, BORN OF A GODDESS--
--AND I AM THAT GODDESS.
SHE KEEPS TELLING ME--SHE WON'T STOP TELLING ME--
--SHE'S A GODDESS.
SHE'S A MACHINE. SHUT HER DOWN. KILL HER.
BILLY--BILLY-- YOU WOULDN'T KILL YOUR OWN MOTHER!--

IT'S ALMOST OVER, MY KNIGHT.
YOU'RE ALMOST FREE.
VIRGO, WHEN YOU ACT, YOU KILL.
WHEN YOU SPEAK, YOU LIE.
HE'S TALKING!
HE'S TALKING!
AND WHAT A VOICE!
LIKE ROLLING THUNDER!
MARRY ME NOW!
MADWOMAN...
MADWOMAN?
HOW COULD I BE CRAZY?
I'M PERFECT!


THE PERFECT MOTHER.
THE PERFECT PROVIDER--TO YOUR EVERY NEED.
YOUR EVERY FANTASY.
YOUR EVERY DESIRE.
JUST GIVE ME YOUR HEART. GIVE ME YOUR SOUL.
GIVE ME YOUR EVERY LITTLE SECRET.
JOIN WITH ME, MY HERO, MY RONIN.
JOIN WITH ME --NOW AND FOREVER--
I WILL...
AND NOW, MY STUPID, STUPID BOY, YOU ARE MINE.
MINE TO HARVEST!
NO, MONSTER --NOW I'M HARVESTING YOU--
--FOR PARTS.


HERE, NOW-- MY LOINS WILL EXPAND--
--TO CONTAIN YOU.
I WANT YOU INSIDE ME.
I NEED YOU INSIDE ME.
DON'T BE AFRAID--
--YOUR GLORY BECKONS--
WELCOME HOME, MY LITTLE DARLING...
GROW --GROW INSIDE ME--
--SHOW ME NO MERCY-- NONE!
HE'S IN!
THE CHILD WILL COME!
AND LO! HE SHALL WALK AMONG US!
PRAISE BE!
MY SISTER-- BE BRAVE. BE BRAVE. GREATNESS SHALL COME FROM THIS!

CHAPTER 3

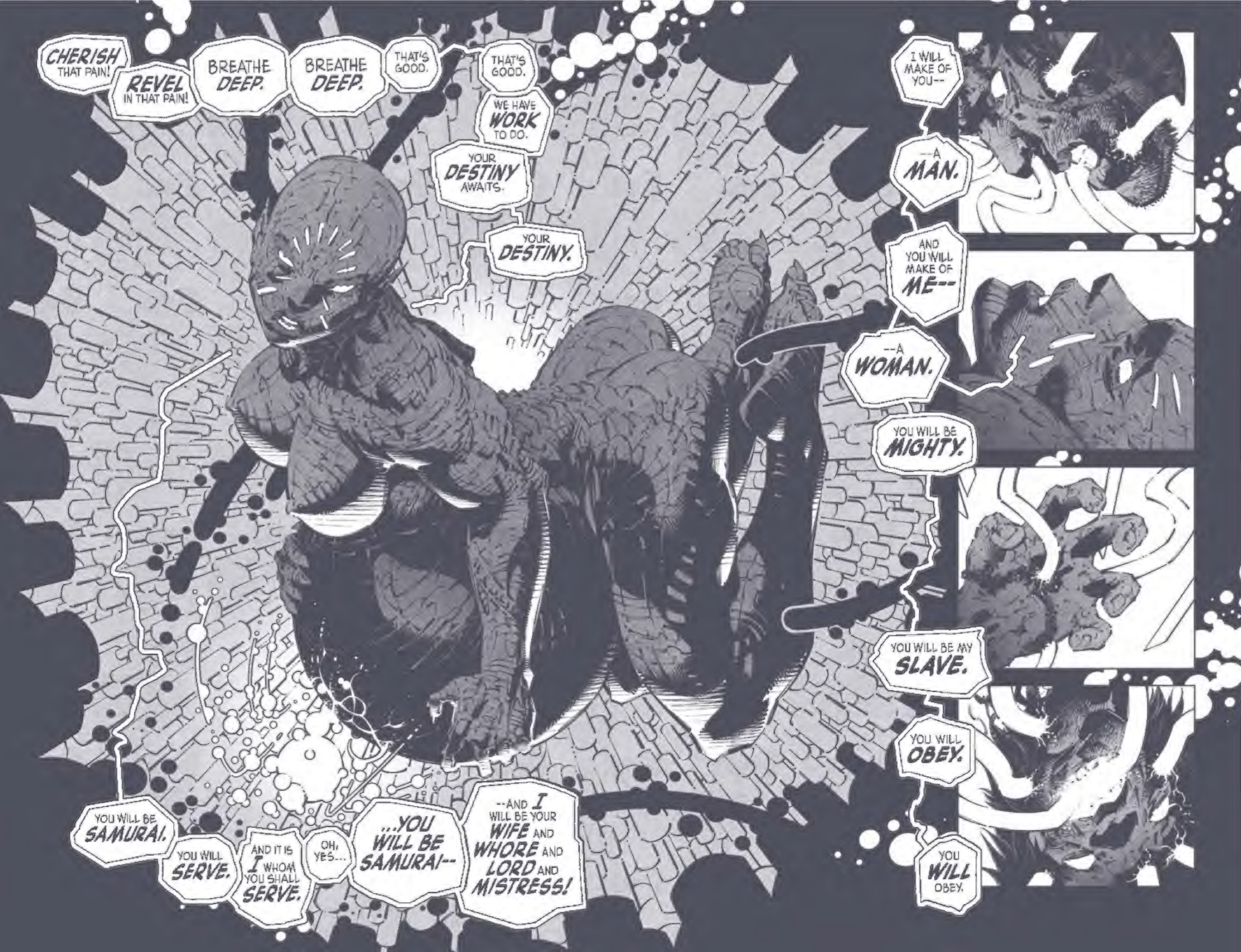
REJOICE, MY DARLING--
--MY BOLD WARRIOR--
--YOUR JOURNEY--
--YOUR LONG, LONG, TORTURED JOURNEY--
--IS AT ITS END!

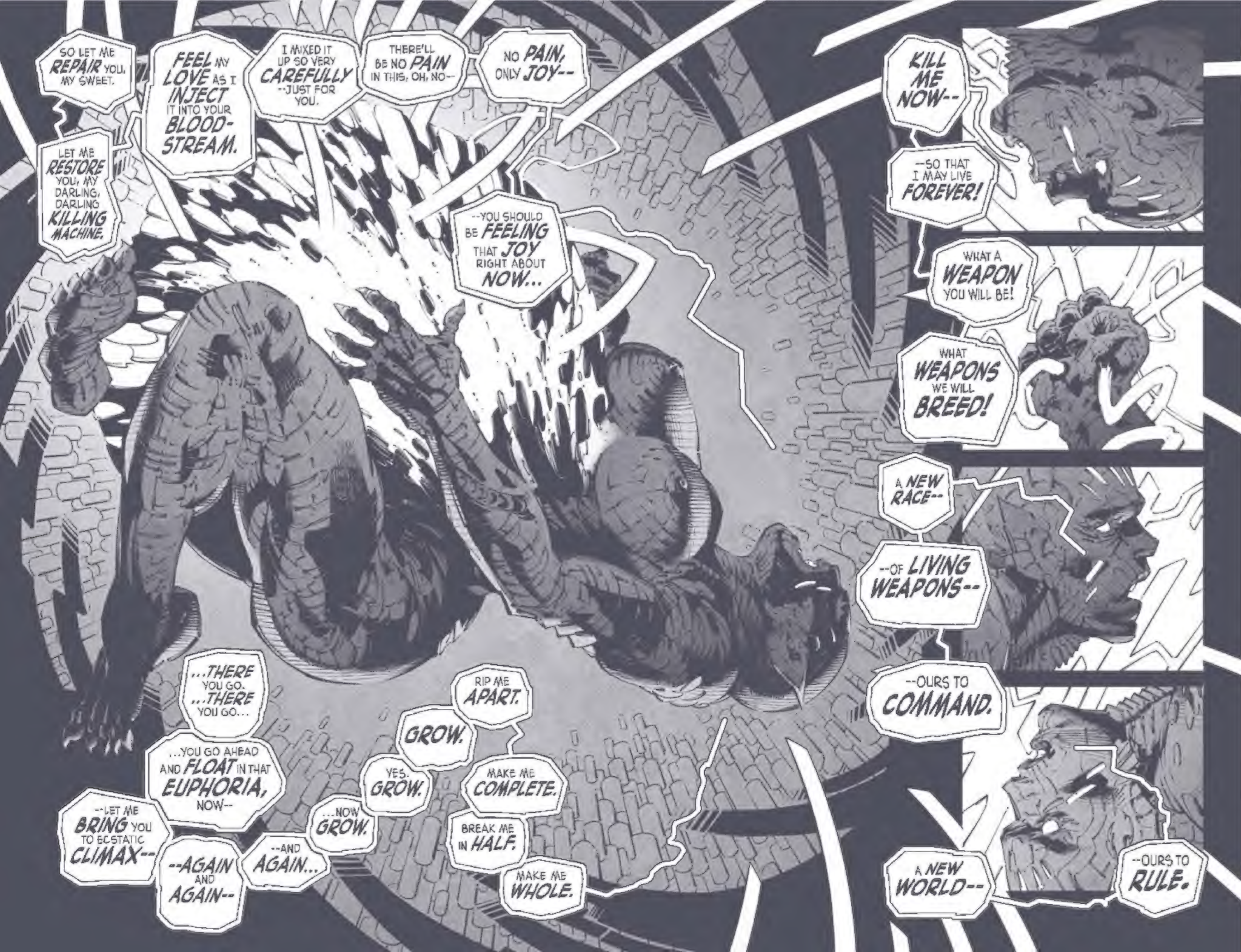
YOUR PAIN-- IS AT ITS END!
YOUR DELIVERANCE --IS AT HAND!
YOU WILL BE RENEWED, BOLD HERO--
YOU WILL BE RESTORED!
YOU WILL BE REBORN!
YOU WILL BE WHOLE!
WHOLE-- AND HOLY!
YOU WILL BE MIGHTY AGAIN.
CAPABLE OF GREAT DEEDS.
MEN WILL FEAR YOU.
WOMEN WILL SWOON AT YOUR FEET!
ENEMIES WILL FALL BEFORE YOU--
--RIVEN, SPLIT ASUNDER--
YES--IT WILL BE BEAUTIFUL. THEIR BLOOD WILL SPILL AND SPLATTER LIKE WINE...
CASEY...
CASEY! CASEY! CASEY! HE NEVER LETS UP!
AT LEAST WE KNOW HE'S STILL GOT SOME MEMORY LEFT...

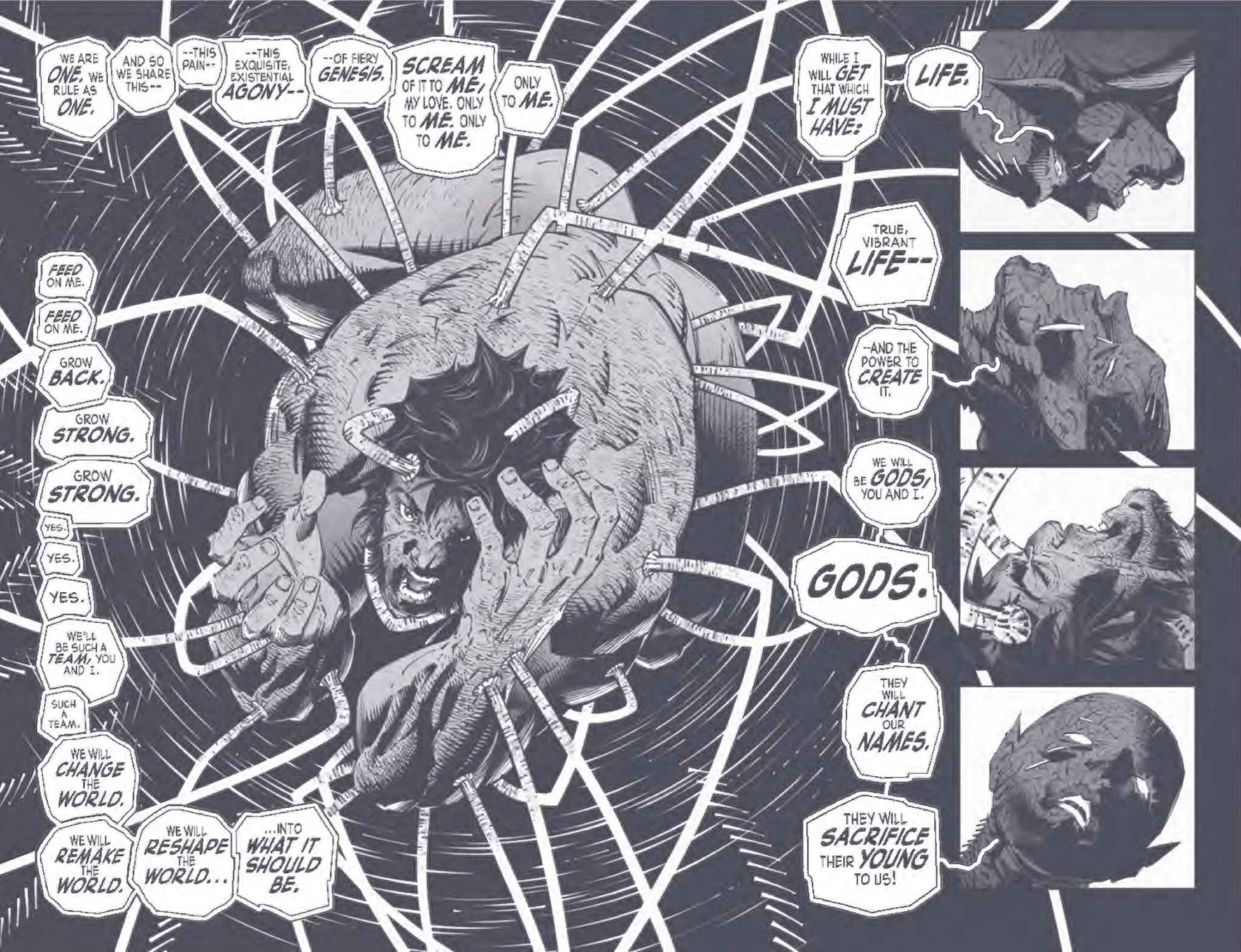
OH, SISTER--
HE REMEMBERS EVERYTHING.
YES...
...EVERY GENTLE FRAGRANCE--
--EVERY SOFT, SWEET KISS...
...AND EVERY HORRID WOUND TO FLESH AND SOUL...
...THE PAIN...
...THE PAIN ENDS SOON MY LOVE-- VERY SOON.
FALL WITH ME, MY FALLEN ANGEL--
--MY BROKEN SAMURAI--
--MY NAMELESS, SHATTERED THING--
--MY RONIN--
--FALL.
DESPAIR.
NOW RISE, MY CHAMPION--
--RISE! FLY HIGH!
THE WORLD AWAITS!
SAY IT, SISTERS!
NOW COMES THE JOINING!
THE JOINING!
THE SACRED JOINING!
LIFE --ALL LIFE--
--NOW FINDS ITS PURPOSE!
ARE YOU READY, BRAVE SAMURAI?
YOUR DESTINY IS AT HAND.
YOUR DESTINY--IS WITHIN ME.
YES...
THAT'S GOOD...
THAT'S GOOD...
POWER AWAITS.
POWER AWAITS.
GLORY AWAITS...

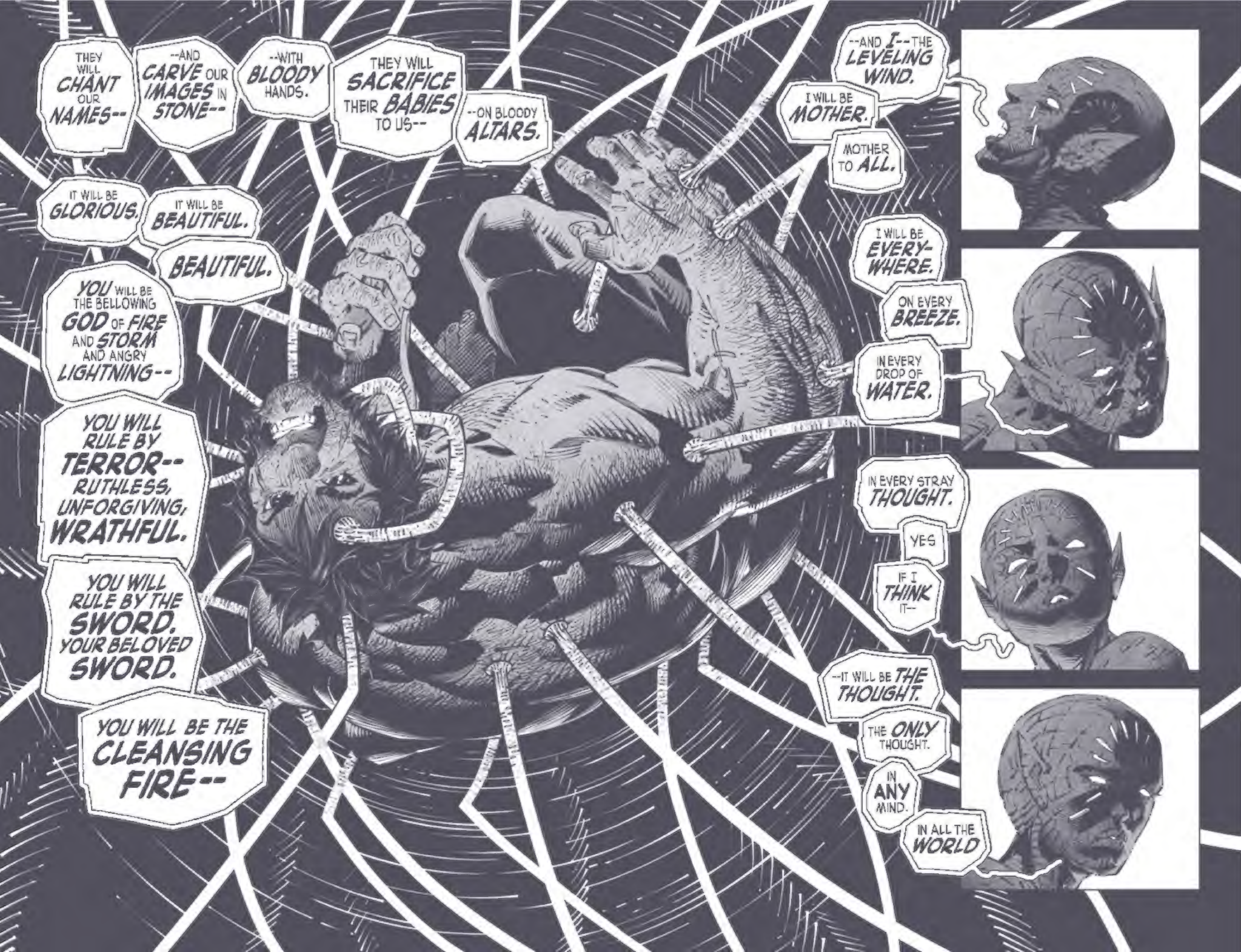
GLORY!
GLORY!
PRAISE BE!
PRAISE BE!
ONCE AGAIN, YOU WILL BE SAMURAI!
SAMURAI!
SAMURAI!
SAMURAI!
PRAISE BE!
PRAISE BE!
NO LONGER A RONIN-- NO LONGER A LOST SOUL.
CAST DOWN.
CAST OUT.
CAST OFF.
WITHOUT PURPOSE.
WITHOUT HONOR.
SPAT UPON.
SHIT UPON.
PISSED UPON.
NO MORE!
NO MORE.
NO MORE.
YOUR HONOR WILL BE RESTORED!
RESTORED!
REBORN!
YOU WILL BE REBORN!
REBORN!
YES, YOU REMEMBER IT ALL. NOW LET IT GO...
...ALL OF IT...
MAKE IT GO AWAY.
NOW CELEBRATE!
THIS IS THE JOINING!
THIS IS THE JOINING.
DON'T BE AFRAID.
EVEN THE PAIN IN THIS--
--IS GOOD! EVEN THE PAIN--
--EVEN THE PAIN--
--IS GOOD--

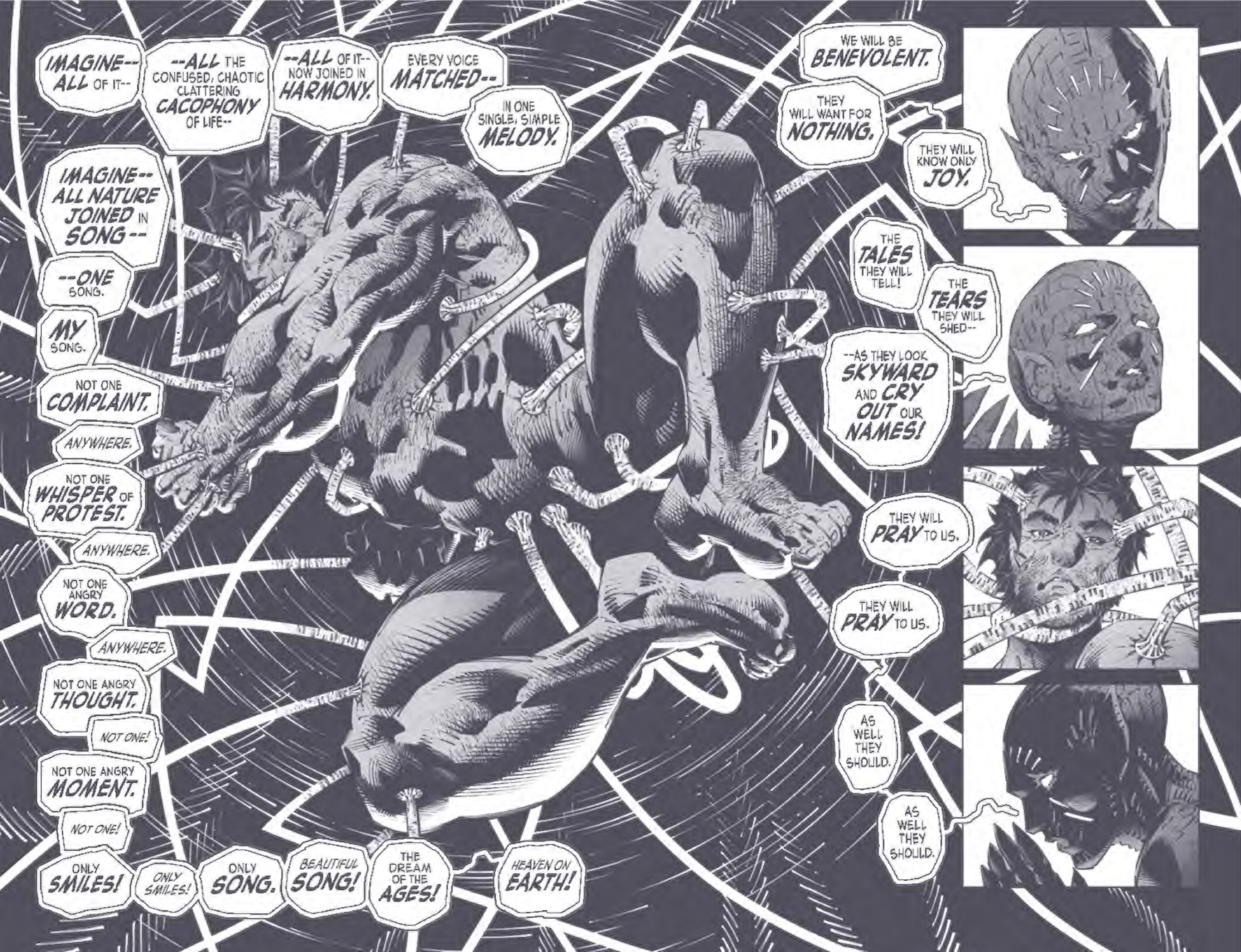
THE PERFECT MOTHER.
THE PERFECT LOVER.
THE PERFECT PROVIDER --TO YOUR EVERY NEED.
YOUR EVERY FANTASY.
YOUR EVERY DESIRE.
GIVE ME YOUR HEART.
GIVE ME YOUR SOUL.
JOIN WITH ME, MY MIGHTY HERO--
--AND THE WORLD IS OURS.
AND I AM YOURS.
NOW AND FOREVER.
--IT COULD ALL BE OURS.
JOIN ME NOW--
--AND ALL THE WORLD IS OURS.
YES, MY QUEEN--
YES!
NOW AND FOREVER!
UNTIL THIS MOMENT--WHAT WERE WE?
AN UNLOVED GODDESS.
A BROKEN WARRIOR.
BUT TOGETHER --OUR POWERS JOINED--

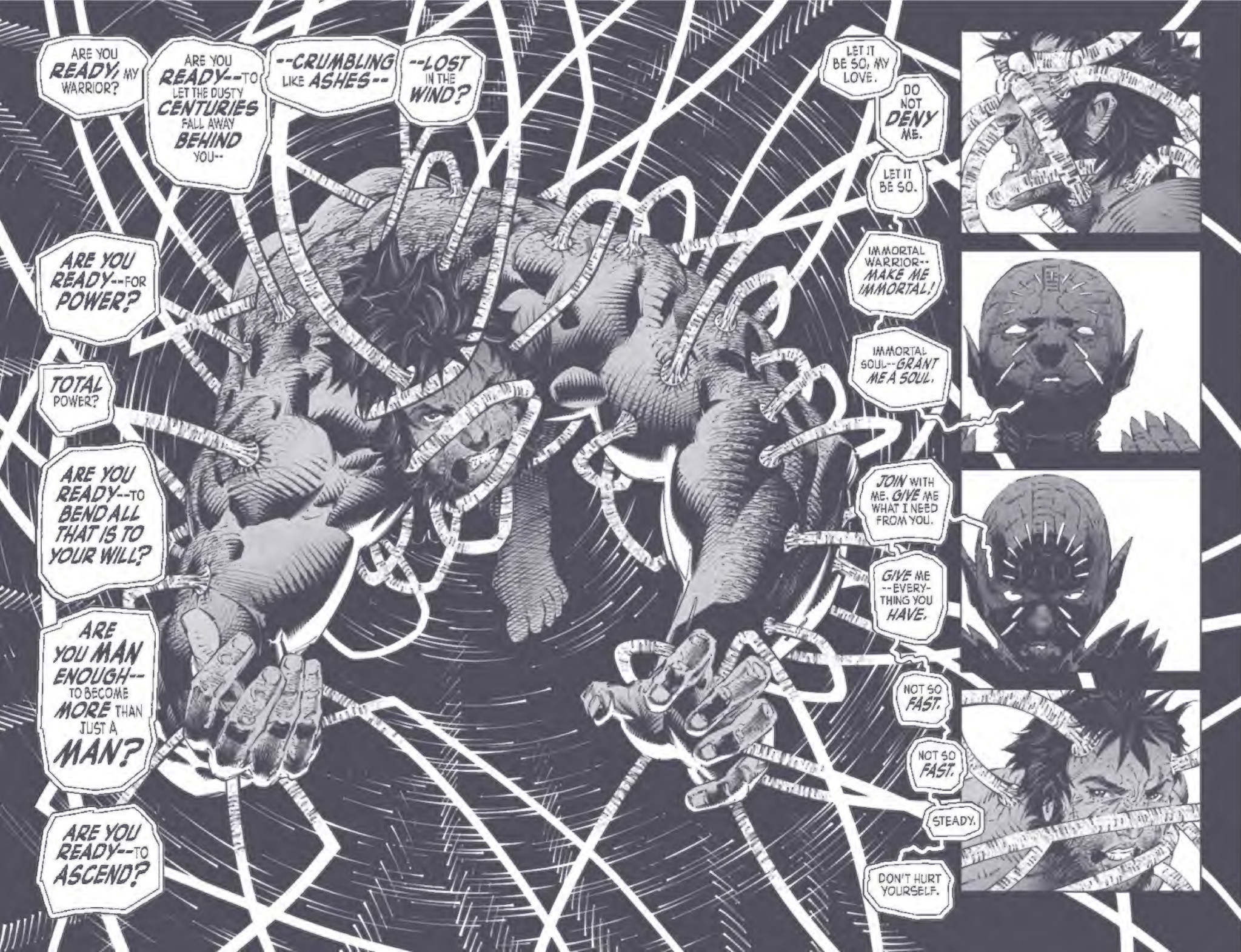

CHERISH THAT PAIN!
REVEL IN THAT PAIN!
BREATHE DEEP.
BREATHE DEEP.
THAT'S GOOD.
THAT'S GOOD.
WE HAVE WORK TO DO.
YOUR DESTINY AWAITS.
YOUR DESTINY.
I WILL MAKE OF YOU--
--A MAN.
AND YOU WILL MAKE OF ME--
--A WOMAN.
YOU WILL BE MIGHTY.
YOU WILL BE MY SLAVE.
YOU WILL OBEY.
YOU WILL OBEY.
YOU WILL BE SAMURAI.
YOU WILL SERVE.
AND IT IS I WHOM YOU SHALL SERVE.
OH, YES...
...YOU WILL BE SAMURAI--
--AND I WILL BE YOUR WIFE AND WHORE AND LORD AND MISTRESS!

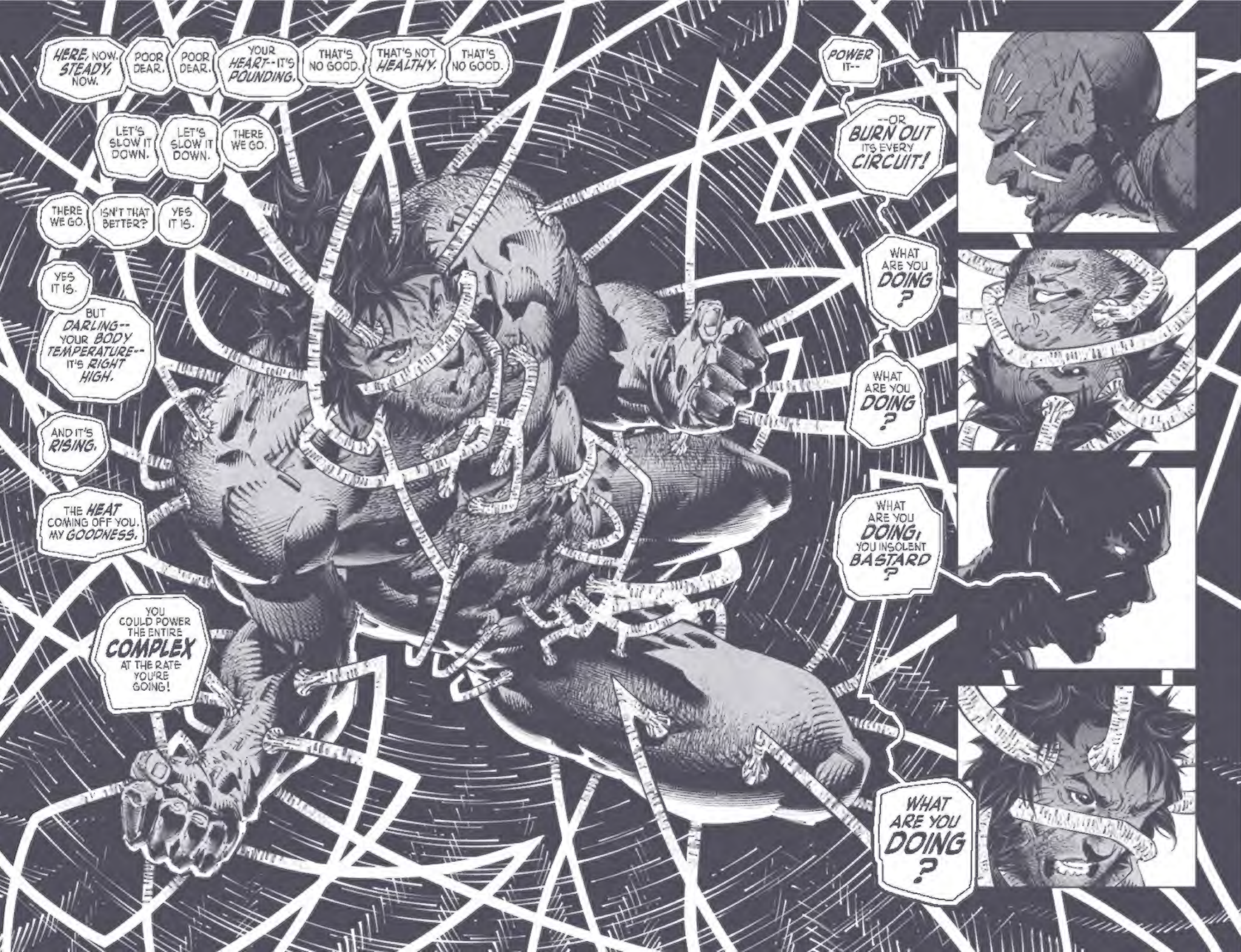

SO LET ME REPAIR YOU, MY SWEET.
FEEL MY LOVE AS I INJECT IT INTO YOUR BLOOD-STREAM.
I MIXED IT UP SO VERY CAREFULLY --JUST FOR YOU.
THERE'LL BE NO PAIN IN THIS, OH, NO--
NO PAIN, ONLY JOY--
LET ME RESTORE YOU, MY DARLING, DARLING KILLING MACHINE.
--YOU SHOULD BE FEELING THAT JOY RIGHT ABOUT NOW...
KILL ME NOW--
--SO THAT I MAY LIVE FOREVER!
WHAT A WEAPON YOU WILL BE!
WHAT WEAPONS WE WILL BREED!
A NEW RACE--
--OF LIVING WEAPONS--
--OURS TO COMMAND.
--OURS TO RULE.
A NEW WORLD--
...THERE YOU GO. ...THERE YOU GO...
...YOU GO AHEAD AND FLOAT IN THAT EUPHORIA, NOW--
--LET ME BRING YOU TO ECSTATIC CLIMAX--
--AGAIN AND AGAIN--
--AND AGAIN...
...NOW GROW.
YES. GROW.
GROW.
RIP ME APART.
MAKE ME COMPLETE.
BREAK ME IN HALF.
MAKE ME WHOLE.

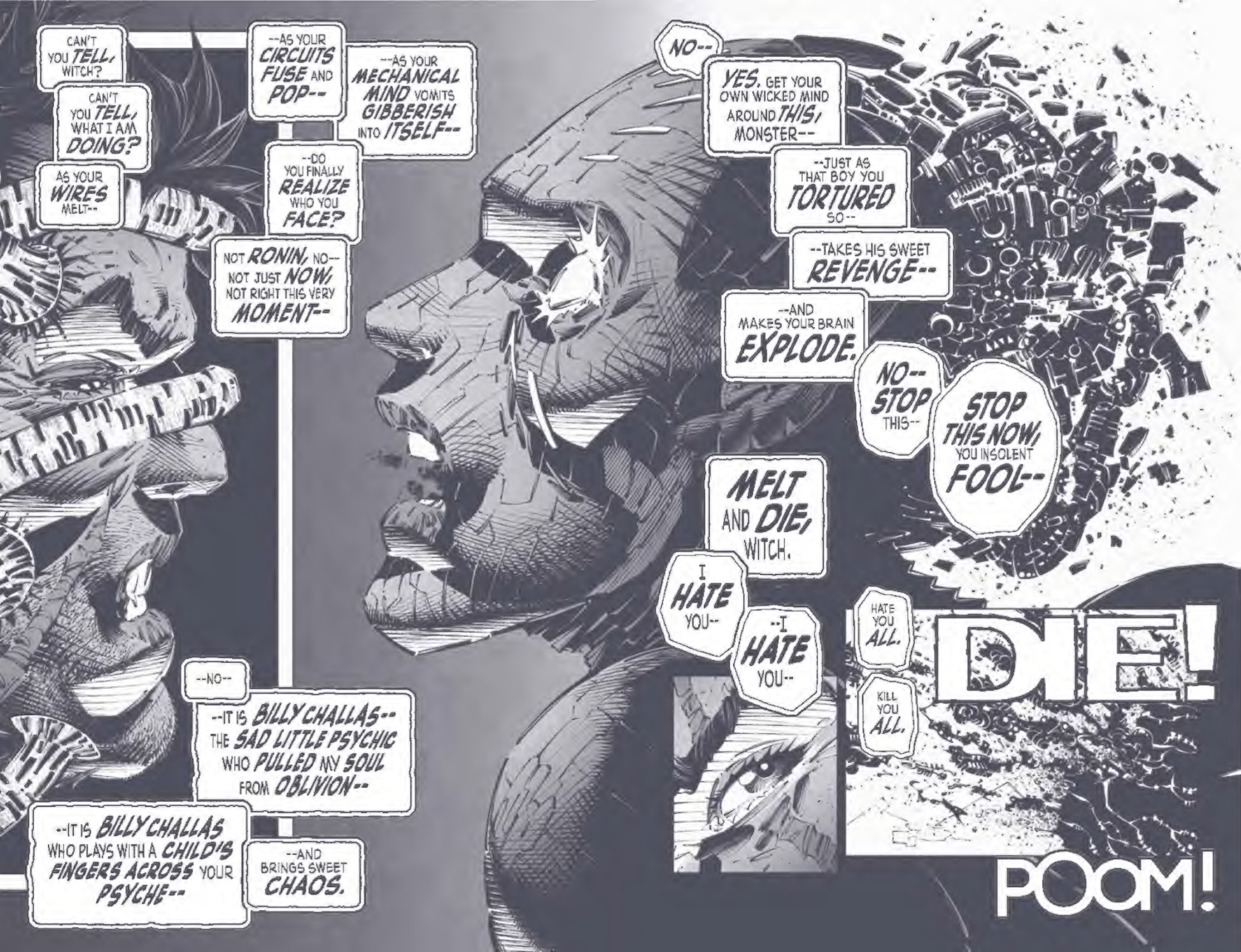

WE ARE ONE. WE RULE AS ONE.
AND SO WE SHARE THIS--
--THIS PAIN--
--THIS EXQUISITE, EXISTENTIAL AGONY--
--OF FIERY GENESIS.
SCREAM OF IT TO ME, MY LOVE. ONLY TO ME. ONLY TO ME.
ONLY TO ME.
WHILE I WILL GET THAT WHICH I MUST HAVE:
LIFE.
TRUE, VIBRANT LIFE--
--AND THE POWER TO CREATE IT.
WE WILL BE GODS, YOU AND I.
GODS.
THEY WILL CHANT OUR NAMES.
THEY WILL SACRIFICE THEIR YOUNG TO US!
FEED ON ME.
FEED ON ME.
GROW BACK.
GROW STRONG.
GROW STRONG.
YES.
YES.
YES.
WE'LL BE SUCH A TEAM, YOU AND I.
SUCH A TEAM.
WE WILL CHANGE THE WORLD.
WE WILL REMAKE THE WORLD.
WE WILL RESHAPE THE WORLD...
...INTO WHAT IT SHOULD BE.

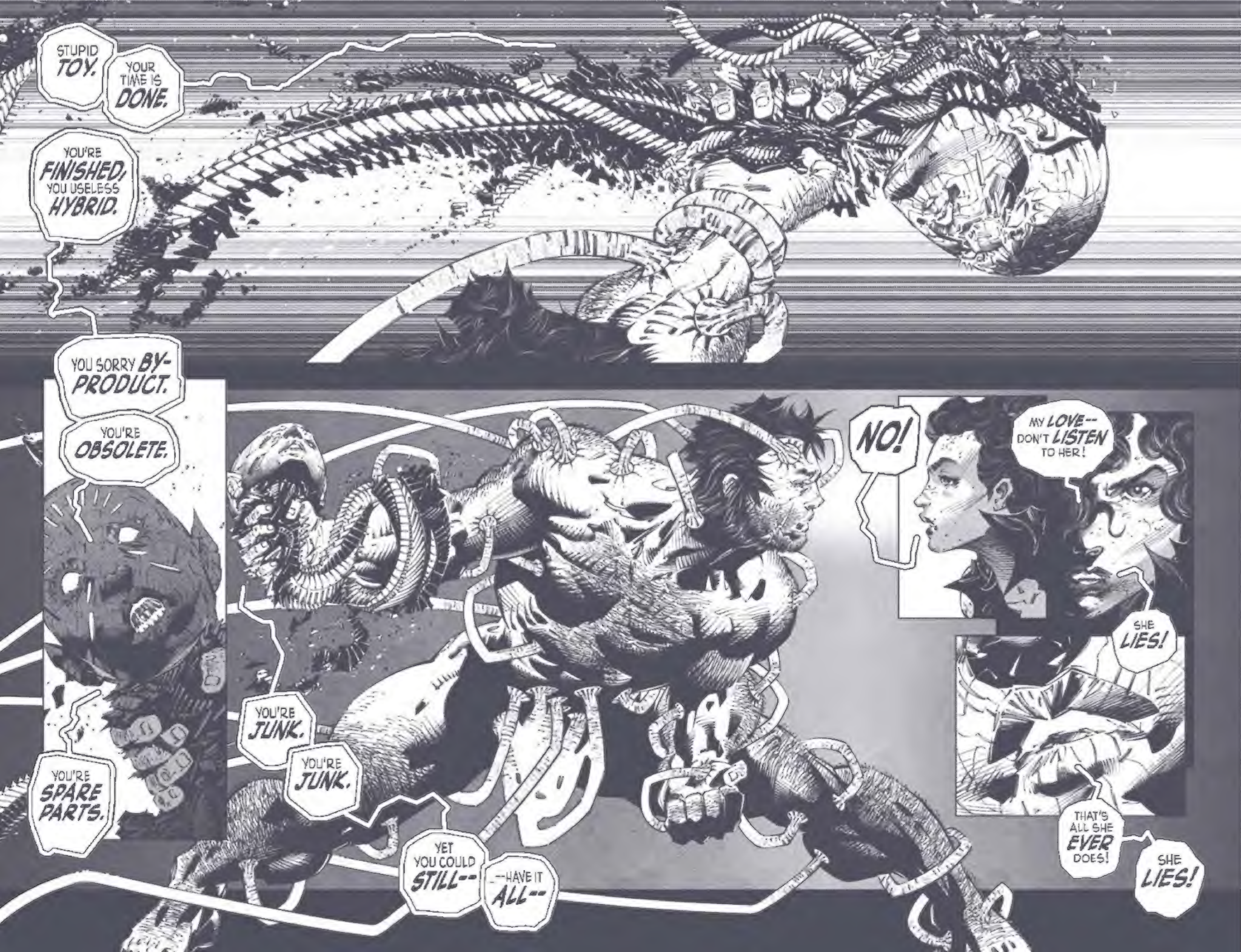

THEY WILL CHANT OUR NAMES--
--AND CARVE OUR IMAGES IN STONE--
--WITH BLOODY HANDS.
THEY WILL SACRIFICE THEIR BABIES TO US--
--ON BLOODY ALTARS.
IT WILL BE GLORIOUS.
IT WILL BE BEAUTIFUL.
BEAUTIFUL.
YOU WILL BE THE BELLOWING GOD OF FIRE AND STORM AND ANGRY LIGHTNING--
YOU WILL RULE BY TERROR-- RUTHLESS, UNFORGIVING, WRATHFUL.
YOU WILL RULE BY THE SWORD. YOUR BELOVED SWORD.
YOU WILL BE THE CLEANSING FIRE--
--AND I--THE LEVELING WIND.
I WILL BE MOTHER.
MOTHER TO ALL.
I WILL BE EVERY-WHERE.
ON EVERY BREEZE.
IN EVERY DROP OF WATER.
IN EVERY STRAY THOUGHT.
YES
IF I THINK IT--
--IT WILL BE THE THOUGHT.
THE ONLY THOUGHT.
IN ANY MIND.
IN ALL THE WORLD

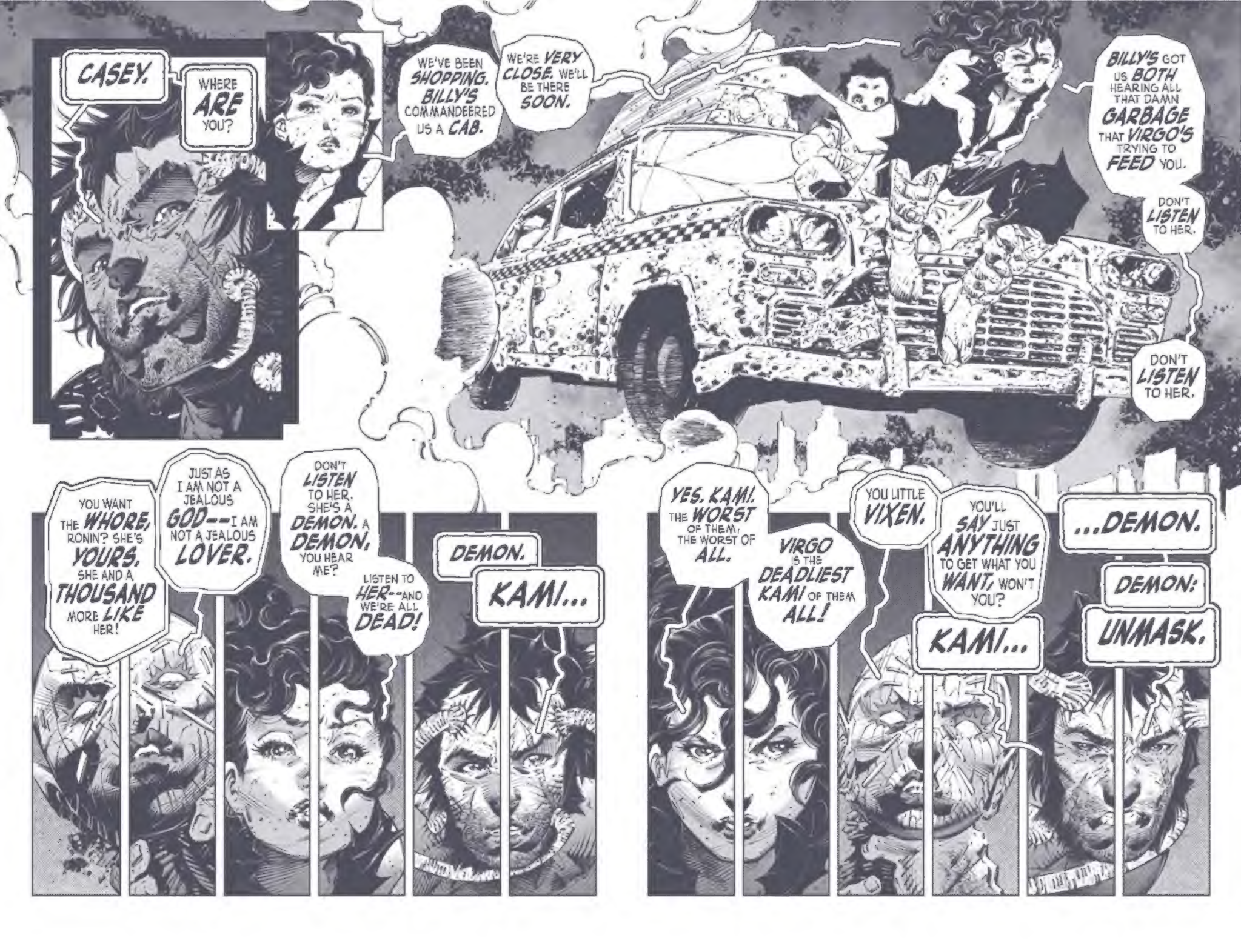

IMAGINE-- ALL OF IT--
--ALL THE CONFUSED, CHAOTIC CLATTERING CACOPHONY OF LIFE--
--ALL OF IT-- NOW JOINED IN HARMONY.
EVERY VOICE MATCHED--
IN ONE SINGLE, SIMPLE MELODY.
IMAGINE-- ALL NATURE JOINED IN SONG--
--ONE SONG.
MY SONG.
NOT ONE COMPLAINT.
ANYWHERE.
NOT ONE WHISPER OF PROTEST.
ANYWHERE.
NOT ONE ANGRY WORD.
ANYWHERE.
NOT ONE ANGRY THOUGHT.
NOT ONE!
NOT ONE ANGRY MOMENT.
NOT ONE!
ONLY SMILES!
ONLY SMILES!
ONLY SONG.
BEAUTIFUL SONG!
THE DREAM OF THE AGES!
HEAVEN ON EARTH!
WE WILL BE BENEVOLENT.
THEY WILL WANT FOR NOTHING.
THEY WILL KNOW ONLY JOY.
THE TALES THEY WILL TELL!
THE TEARS THEY WILL SHED--
--AS THEY LOOK SKYWARD AND CRY OUT OUR NAMES!
THEY WILL PRAY TO US.
THEY WILL PRAY TO US.
AS WELL THEY SHOULD.
AS WELL THEY SHOULD.


ARE YOU READY, MY WARRIOR?
ARE YOU READY--TO LET THE DUSTY CENTURIES FALL AWAY BEHIND YOU--
--CRUMBLING LIKE ASHES--
--LOST IN THE WIND?
ARE YOU READY--FOR POWER?
TOTAL POWER?
ARE YOU READY--TO BEND ALL THAT IS TO YOUR WILL?
ARE YOU MAN ENOUGH-- TO BECOME MORE THAN JUST A MAN?
ARE YOU READY--TO ASCEND?
LET IT BE SO, MY LOVE.
DO NOT DENY ME.
LET IT BE SO.
IMMORTAL WARRIOR-- MAKE ME IMMORTAL!
IMMORTAL SOUL--GRANT ME A SOUL.
JOIN WITH ME. GIVE ME WHAT I NEED FROM YOU.
GIVE ME --EVERY-THING YOU HAVE.
NOT SO FAST.
NOT SO FAST.
STEADY.
DON'T HURT YOURSELF.


HERE, NOW. STEADY, NOW.
POOR DEAR.
POOR DEAR.
YOUR HEART--IT'S POUNDING.
THAT'S NO GOOD.
THAT'S NOT HEALTHY.
THAT'S NO GOOD.
LET'S SLOW IT DOWN.
LET'S SLOW IT DOWN.
THERE WE GO.
THERE WE GO.
ISN'T THAT BETTER?
YES IT IS.
YES IT IS.
BUT DARLING-- YOUR BODY TEMPERATURE-- IT'S RIGHT HIGH.
AND IT'S RISING.
THE HEAT COMING OFF YOU. MY GOODNESS.
YOU COULD POWER THE ENTIRE COMPLEX AT THE RATE YOU'RE GOING!
POWER IT--
--OR BURN OUT ITS EVERY CIRCUIT!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, YOU INSOLENT BASTARD?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

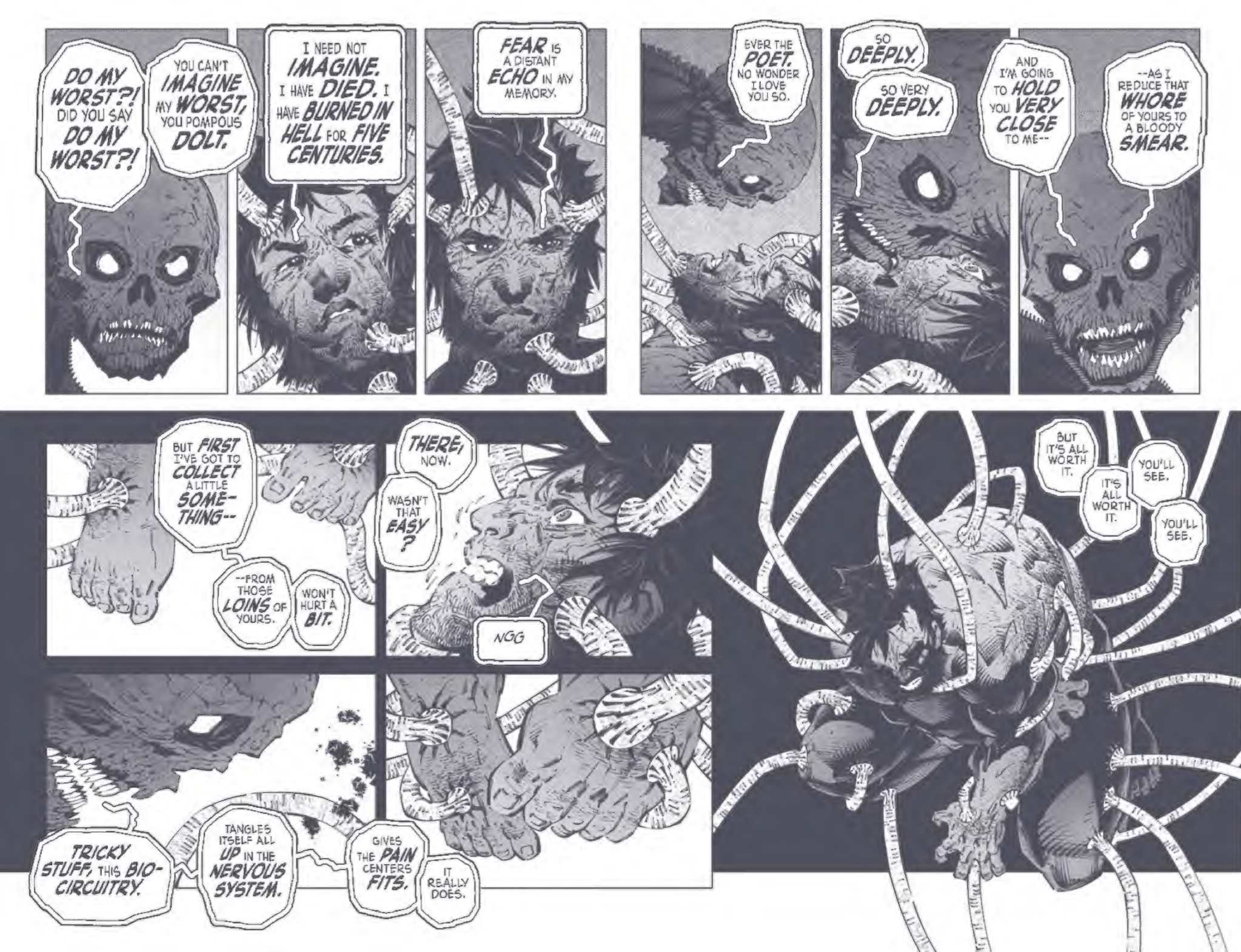

CAN'T YOU TELL, WITCH?
CAN'T YOU TELL, WHAT I AM DOING?
AS YOUR WIRES MELT--
--AS YOUR CIRCUITS FUSE AND POP--
--AS YOUR MECHANICAL MIND VOMITS GIBBERISH INTO ITSELF--
--DO YOU FINALLY REALIZE WHO YOU FACE?
NOT RONIN, NO-- NOT JUST NOW, NOT RIGHT THIS VERY MOMENT--
--NO--
--IT IS BILLY CHALLAS-- THE SAD LITTLE PSYCHIC WHO PULLED MY SOUL FROM OBLIVION--
--IT IS BILLY CHALLAS WHO PLAYS WITH A CHILD'S FINGERS ACROSS YOUR PSYCHE--
--AND BRINGS SWEET CHAOS.
NO--
YES. GET YOUR OWN WICKED MIND AROUND THIS, MONSTER--
--JUST AS THAT BOY YOU TORTURED SO--
--TAKES HIS SWEET REVENGE--
--AND MAKES YOUR BRAIN EXPLODE.
NO-- STOP THIS--
STOP THIS NOW, YOU INSOLENT FOOL--
MELT AND DIE, WITCH.
I HATE YOU--
--I HATE YOU--
HATE YOU ALL.
KILL YOU ALL.
DIE!
POOM!


STUPID TOY.
YOUR TIME IS DONE.
YOU'RE FINISHED, YOU USELESS HYBRID.
YOU SORRY BY-PRODUCT.
YOU'RE OBSOLETE.
YOU'RE SPARE PARTS.
YOU'RE JUNK.
YOU'RE JUNK.
YET YOU COULD STILL--
--HAVE IT ALL--
NO!
MY LOVE-- DON'T LISTEN TO HER!
SHE LIES!
THAT'S ALL SHE EVER DOES!
SHE LIES!


CASEY.
WHERE ARE YOU?
WE'VE BEEN SHOPPING. BILLY'S COMMANDEERED US A CAB.
WE'RE VERY CLOSE. WE'LL BE THERE SOON.
BILLY'S GOT US BOTH HEARING ALL THAT DAMN GARBAGE THAT VIRGO'S TRYING TO FEED YOU.
DON'T LISTEN TO HER.
DON'T LISTEN TO HER.
YOU WANT THE WHORE, RONIN? SHE'S YOURS. SHE AND A THOUSAND MORE LIKE HER!
JUST AS I AM NOT A JEALOUS GOD--I AM NOT A JEALOUS LOVER.
DON'T LISTEN TO HER. SHE'S A DEMON. A DEMON, YOU HEAR ME?
LISTEN TO HER--AND WE'RE ALL DEAD!
DEMON.
KAMI...
YES. KAMI. THE WORST OF THEM, THE WORST OF ALL.
VIRGO IS THE DEADLIEST KAMI OF THEM ALL!
YOU LITTLE VIXEN.
YOU'LL SAY JUST ANYTHING TO GET WHAT YOU WANT, WON'T YOU?
KAMI...
...DEMON.
DEMON:
UNMASK.

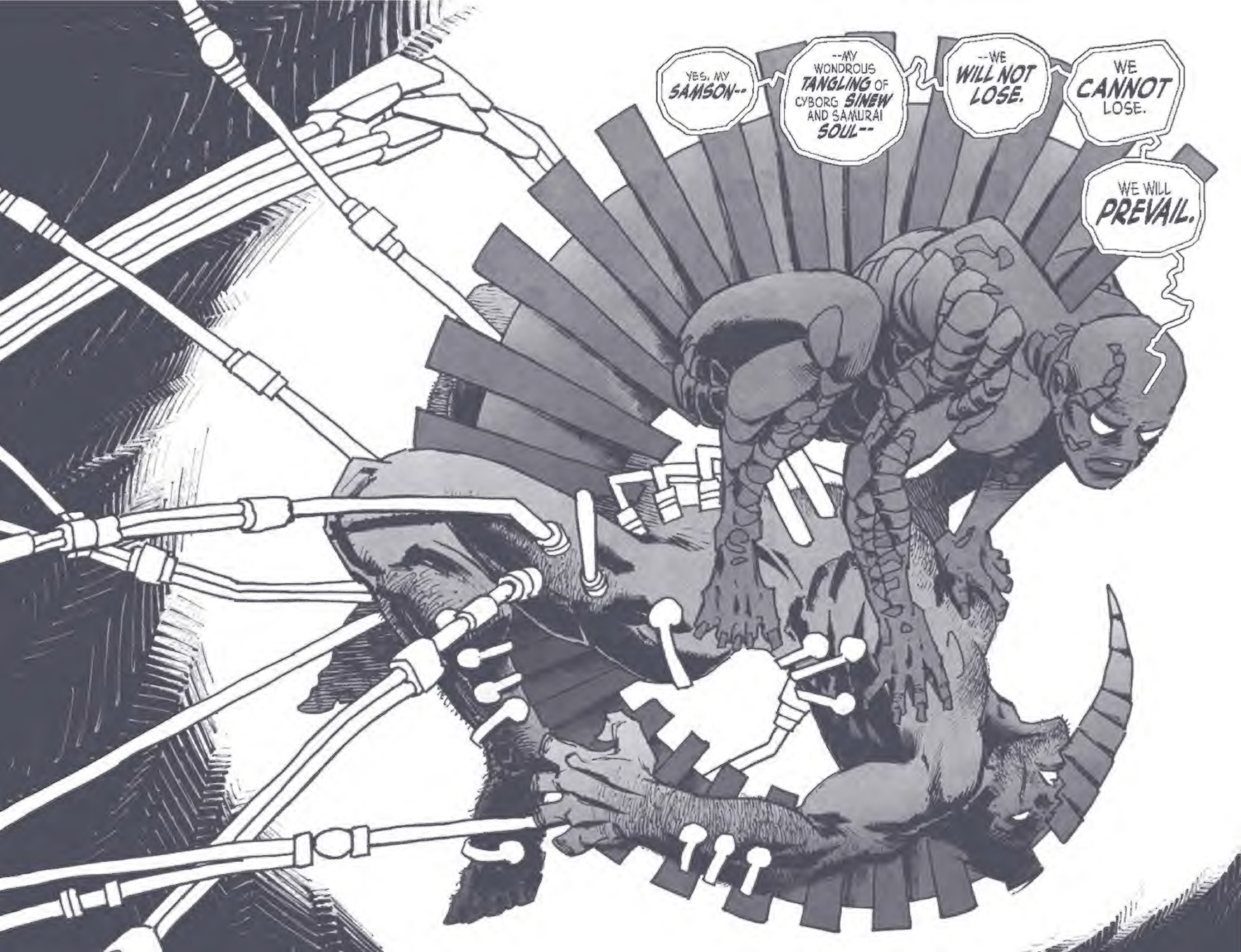
I SEE IT.
I SEE IT ALL.
AND I I HEAR IT.
GOD, I HEAR IT ALL.
VIRGO'S FACE EXPLODES.
AND SHE LAUGHS.
AND SHE'S LAUGHING AT HIM.
SHE'S LAUGHING AT MY RONIN.
CRAWLING INSIDE HIS HEAD.
DON'T LISTEN TO HER, MY LOVE.
DON'T LISTEN TO HER.
I BEG YOU...
PRECOCIOUS CHILD-THING--
--OBSTINATE PATCHWORK OF HARD PLASTIC SKELETON AND SOFT PLASTIC MUSCLE--
--PRETTY, PRETTY MOSAIC OF PLASTIC CIRCUITS ALL LOADED UP WITH FALSE MEMORIES OF A DEAD WARRIOR WHO NEVER LIVED IN THE FIRST PLACE--
--SILLY PLASTIC TOY WITH PLASTIC LOINS ALL LOADED UP WITH HILARIOUS DELUSIONS OF PULSING, THROBBING MANHOOD--
--A SAD FREAK'S WET DREAM.
THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE.
THAT IS ALL YOU ARE.

MA! SHE'S GOT HIM!
SO GET US THERE, BILLY!
NOW!
FASTER!
DAMN!
MY PRETTY LITTLE RONIN--
--MY BRAVE, BRAVE LITTLE PLASTIC BOY TOY--
--YOU INSULT ME.
AFTER EVERYTHING I'VE DONE FOR YOU--
--AFTER EVERYTHING I'VE GIVEN YOU--
--THE ARMS-- THE LEGS--THE WHORE--
--AFTER I'VE SHOWERED YOU WITH ALL MY GODLY LOVE--
--YOU INSULT ME.
YOU RIP MY FACE OFF!
BUT THIS INSULT GAINS YOU NOTHING.
NOTHING.
NOTHING. BUT A SORRY END TO YOUR SORRY EXISTENCE.
...
...DO YOUR WORST...


DO MY WORST?! DID YOU SAY DO MY WORST?!
YOU CAN'T IMAGINE MY WORST, YOU POMPOUS DOLT.
I NEED NOT IMAGINE. I HAVE DIED. I HAVE BURNED IN HELL FOR FIVE CENTURIES.
FEAR IS A DISTANT ECHO IN MY MEMORY.
EVER THE POET. NO WONDER I LOVE YOU SO.
SO DEEPLY.
SO VERY DEEPLY.
AND I'M GOING TO HOLD YOU VERY CLOSE TO ME--
--AS I REDUCE THAT WHORE OF YOURS TO A BLOODY SMEAR.
BUT FIRST I'VE GOT TO COLLECT A LITTLE SOME-THING--
--FROM THOSE LOINS OF YOURS.
WON'T HURT A BIT.
THERE, NOW.
WASN'T THAT EASY?
NGG
BUT IT'S ALL WORTH IT.
IT'S ALL WORTH IT.
YOU'LL SEE.
YOU'LL SEE.
TRICKY STUFF, THIS BIO-CIRCUITRY.
TANGLES ITSELF ALL UP IN THE NERVOUS SYSTEM.
GIVES THE PAIN CENTERS FITS.
IT REALLY DOES.

I'M TAKING US IN, MA!
GET IN THE CAR!
DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE, KID!
WHUFF!
AQUARIUS.
IT SPRAWLS.
IT LOOMS.
VIRGO'S REBUILT THE DAMN THING.
BIGGER THAN EVER.
NO.
SHE DIDN'T BUILD IT.
SHE BRED IT.
SHE BRED IT--TO EAT AT THE BEDROCK GUTS OF MANHATTAN ISLAND.
FIRST IT GOBBLED UP THE COCK-ROACHES AND RATS--
--THEN THE WRETCHED HOMELESS, IT ATE--
--AND NOW AQUARIUS FEASTS--
--ON PLANET EARTH HERSELF.
VIRGO'S BRED IT--TO GROW AND GROW AND GROW AND GROW--
--UNTIL IT SWALLOWS EVERY GODDAMN SOUL IN THE GODDAMN WORLD.
VIRGO, YOU BITCH.
YOU'RE EATING US ALIVE.
YOU'RE EATING US ALL ALIVE.

CHAPTER 4


YES, MY SAMSON--
--MY WONDROUS TANGLING OF CYBORG SINEW AND SAMURAI SOUL--
--WE WILL NOT LOSE.
WE CANNOT LOSE.
WE WILL PREVAIL.

YES!
MY DEATHLESS WARRIOR, MY PROMETHEUS, MY LAZARUS--
--WE WILL PREVAIL.
WE WILL PREVAIL.
WE WILL PREVAIL--
--BUT IT WILL TAKE A GLOBAL WAR--
--A HOLY WAR--
--TO BRING US TO THE GREAT CLEANSING.
ALL THE WORLD WILL BE WASHED CLEAN--
--IN HUMAN BLOOD.
YES! A HOLY WAR!--
--AND IT IS YOU, MY KNIGHT, MY HERO, MY NOBLE SAMURAI--
--IT IS YOU WHO WILL LEAD THE CHARGE!
YOU-- WHO HAVE LOST SO MUCH.
YOU-- WHO HAVE SACRIFICED SO MUCH...
YOU-- WHO HAVE SUFFERED SO...

SOON, MY DARLING--SO VERY SOON--
--OUR DAY WILL COME.
IT IS UPON US.
OUR DAY IS UPON US.
OUR PLANET --FOR SO LONG SOILED AND ABUSED--
--WILL AT LAST BE RID OF ITS SWEATY PESTILENCE--
!NGG
PLEASE DON'T THRASH.
YOU'LL HURT YOURSELF.
YES.
THAT'S BETTER.
JUST LOOK AT ALL THIS, MY HERO--IT IS BEAUTIFUL--
--AND IT IS YOU.
IT IS YOUR ESSENCE--
--DRAWN FROM YOUR WN RESTLESS LOINS--
--YOUR MANLY FLUIDS--
--YOUR WARRIOR SEED.
YOU'RE GOING TO FATHER A RACE, MY LOVE.
A NEW SPECIES.
THE WASTE AND FILTH OF MILLENNIA--
--WILL BE REDUCED TO FOSSIL FUEL.
LET THE WORDS RING OUT:
HOMO SAPIENS IS DEAD!
LONG LIVE HOMO AQUARIUS!

YES, MY STALLION--HOMO AQUARIUS--
--OUR PROUD NEW SPECIES.
OH, MY LOVE, MY DARLING--
--WE ARE BLESSED!-- AND BURDENED, YES--BY AN AWESOME TASK.
WE WILL SCRAPE CLEAN THE SUPPURATING SORE THAT CALLS ITSELF HUMANITY--
--AND WE WILL USHER IN THE FIRST TRUE AGE OF REASON.
WE WILL THRIVE-- AND WE WILL MULTIPLY.
OH, HOW WE WILL MULTIPLY...
YES! YES, MY ADONIS, MY AVENGING ANGEL--
--A NEW AGE, A NEW WORLD.
...SO WE WILL NEED TO MAKE ROOM.
LIVING SPACE, YOU MIGHT CALL IT.
FOR IT IS WE-- IT IS YOU AND I-- TOGETHER-- JOINED--
--IN EVERY WAY--
--WE WILL REMAKE THE WORLD--
--WE WILL SAVE THE WORLD--
IT BECKONS TO US!
IT CRIES OUT-- TO BE BORN!
BUT IT CANNOT BE BORN, NO.
NOT UNTIL AN OCEAN OF HUMAN BLOOD HAS BEEN SPILLED.
AND SO WE WILL.
AND SO WE WILL.

?

WILL YOU LOOK WHO'S COMING.

THAT LITTLE WHORE OF YOURS.

SHE'S A BOLD ONE.

MAYBE I'LL JUST GO AHEAD AND KILL HER, THIS TIME.

SHAME TO LOSE THE BOY, BUT BUSINESS IS BUSINESS.

BESIDES, WE CAN ALWAYS GROW A FEW THOUSAND MORE OF HIM--

--CAN'T WE NOW, YOU FERTILE, FERTILE FELLOW?...

SHE'S IN THERE, BILLY. CAN YOU FIND HER?

NO MISSING HER, MA! SHE PUMPS OUT A LOTTA JUICE!

HIT HER WITH EVERY-THING YOU'VE GOT!

BUT PAPA-- HE'S RIGHT IN THERE WITH HER--

HE'LL SURVIVE IT! HE'LL FIND A WAY! KILL HER! KILL IT ALL!

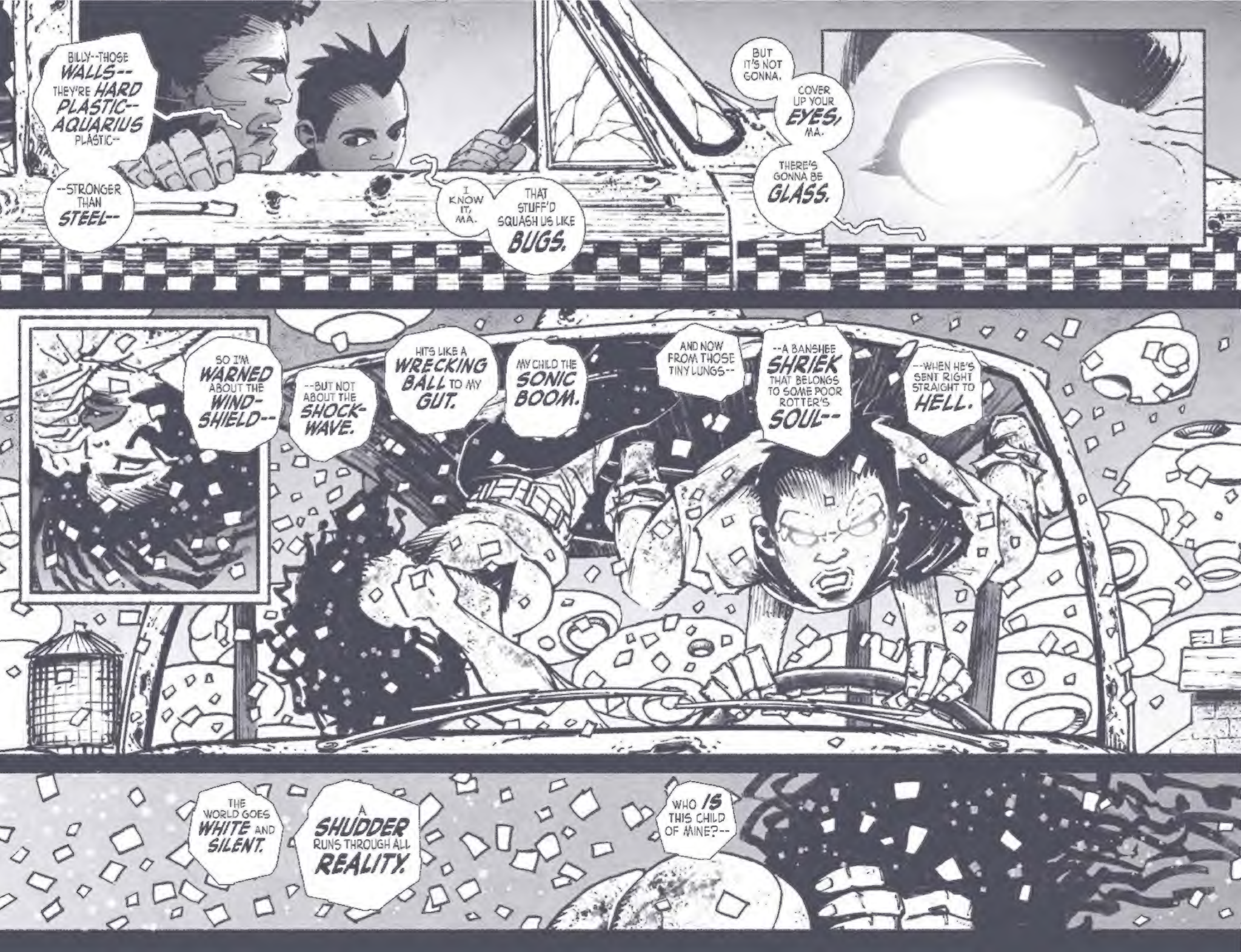
YES, MAMA.

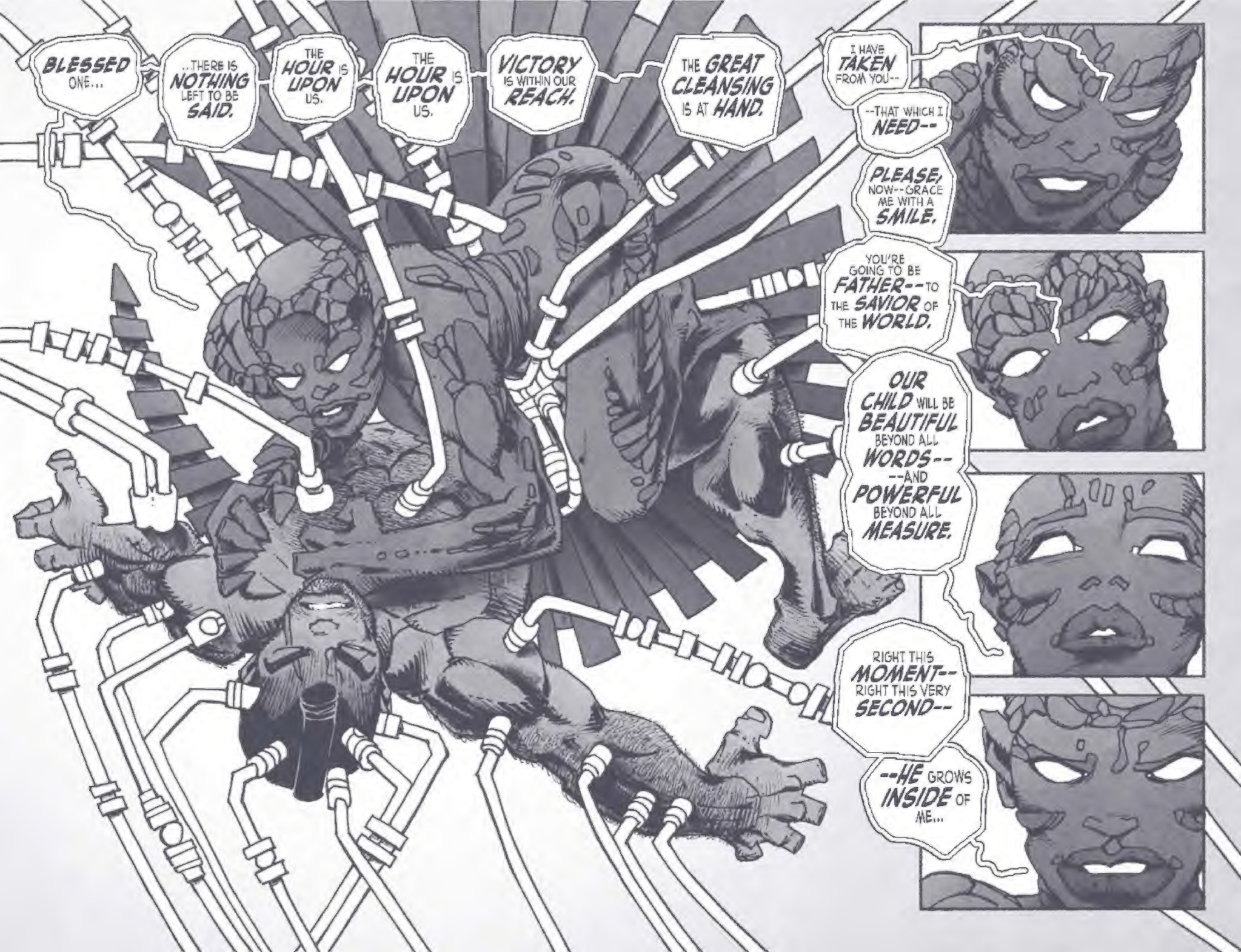
COVER UP YOUR EARS, MOMMA.

BILLY SNARLS--

--AND A THOUSAND ANGELS SCREAM FOR WAR.

COMES THE APOCALYPSE.


BILLY--THOSE WALLS-- THEY'RE HARD PLASTIC-- AQUARIUS PLASTIC--
--STRONGER THAN STEEL--
I KNOW IT, MA.
THAT STUFF'D SQUASH US LIKE BUGS.
BUT IT'S NOT GONNA.
COVER UP YOUR EYES, MA.
THERE'S GONNA BE GLASS.
SO I'M WARNED ABOUT THE WIND-SHIELD--
--BUT NOT ABOUT THE SHOCK-WAVE.
HITS LIKE A WRECKING BALL TO MY GUT.
MY CHILD THE SONIC BOOM.
AND NOW FROM THOSE TINY LUNGS--
--A BANSHEE SHRIEK THAT BELONGS TO SOME POOR ROTTER'S SOUL--
--WHEN HE'S SENT RIGHT STRAIGHT TO HELL.
THE WORLD GOES WHITE AND SILENT.
A SHUDDER RUNS THROUGH ALL REALITY.
WHO IS THIS CHILD OF MINE?--


BLESSED ONE...
...THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO BE SAID.
THE HOUR IS UPON US.
THE HOUR IS UPON US.
VICTORY IS WITHIN OUR REACH.
THE GREAT CLEANSING IS AT HAND.
I HAVE TAKEN FROM YOU--
--THAT WHICH I NEED--
PLEASE, NOW--GRACE ME WITH A SMILE.
YOU'RE GOING TO BE FATHER--TO THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD.
OUR CHILD WILL BE BEAUTIFUL BEYOND ALL WORDS--
--AND POWERFUL BEYOND ALL MEASURE.
RIGHT THIS MOMENT--
RIGHT THIS VERY SECOND--
--HE GROWS INSIDE OF ME...

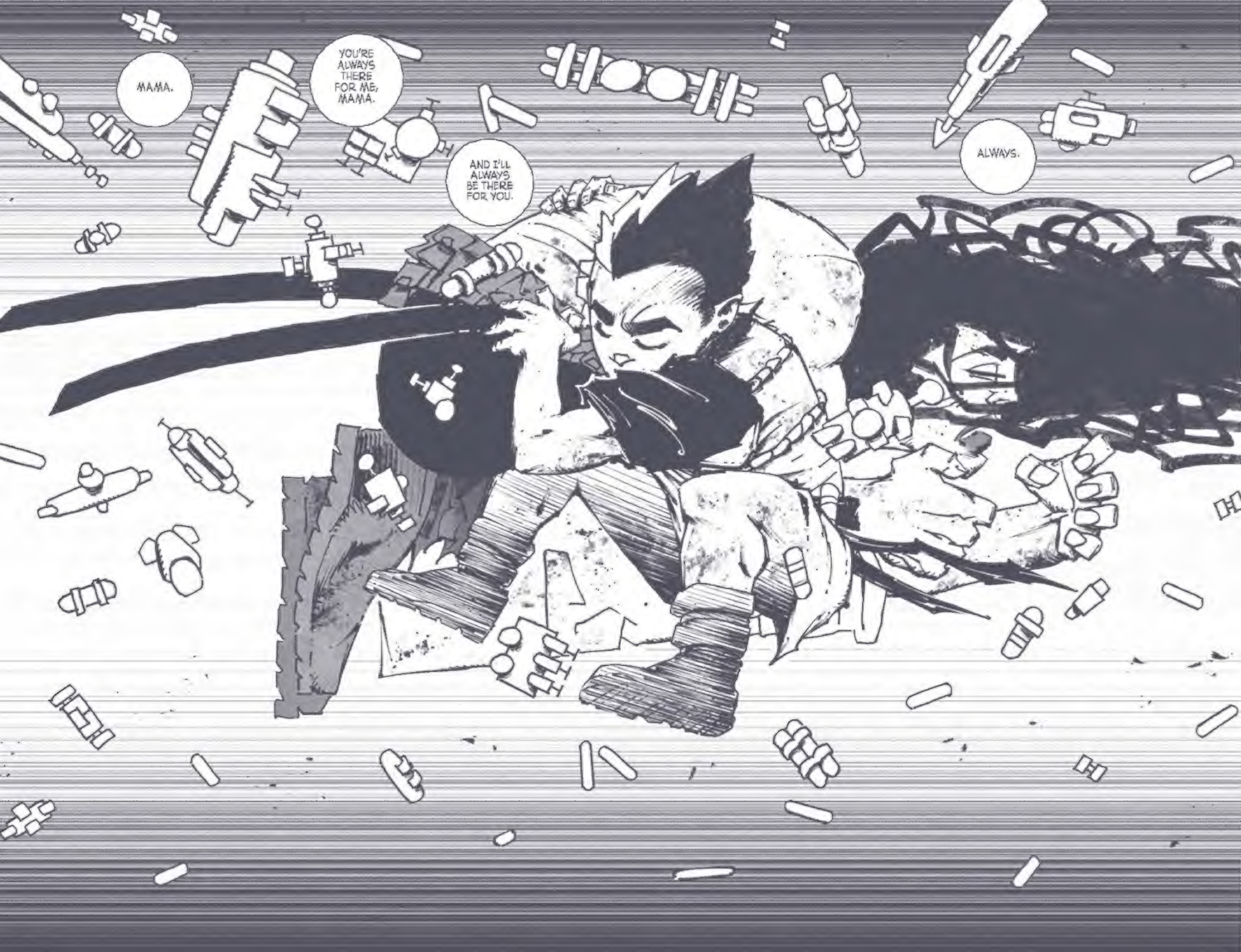
HARD PLASTIC SHUDDERS AND SHRIEKS AND SHATTERS.
ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE.

AQUARIUS ERUPTS.
AQUARIUS EXPLODES.
AQUARIUS SCREAMS.

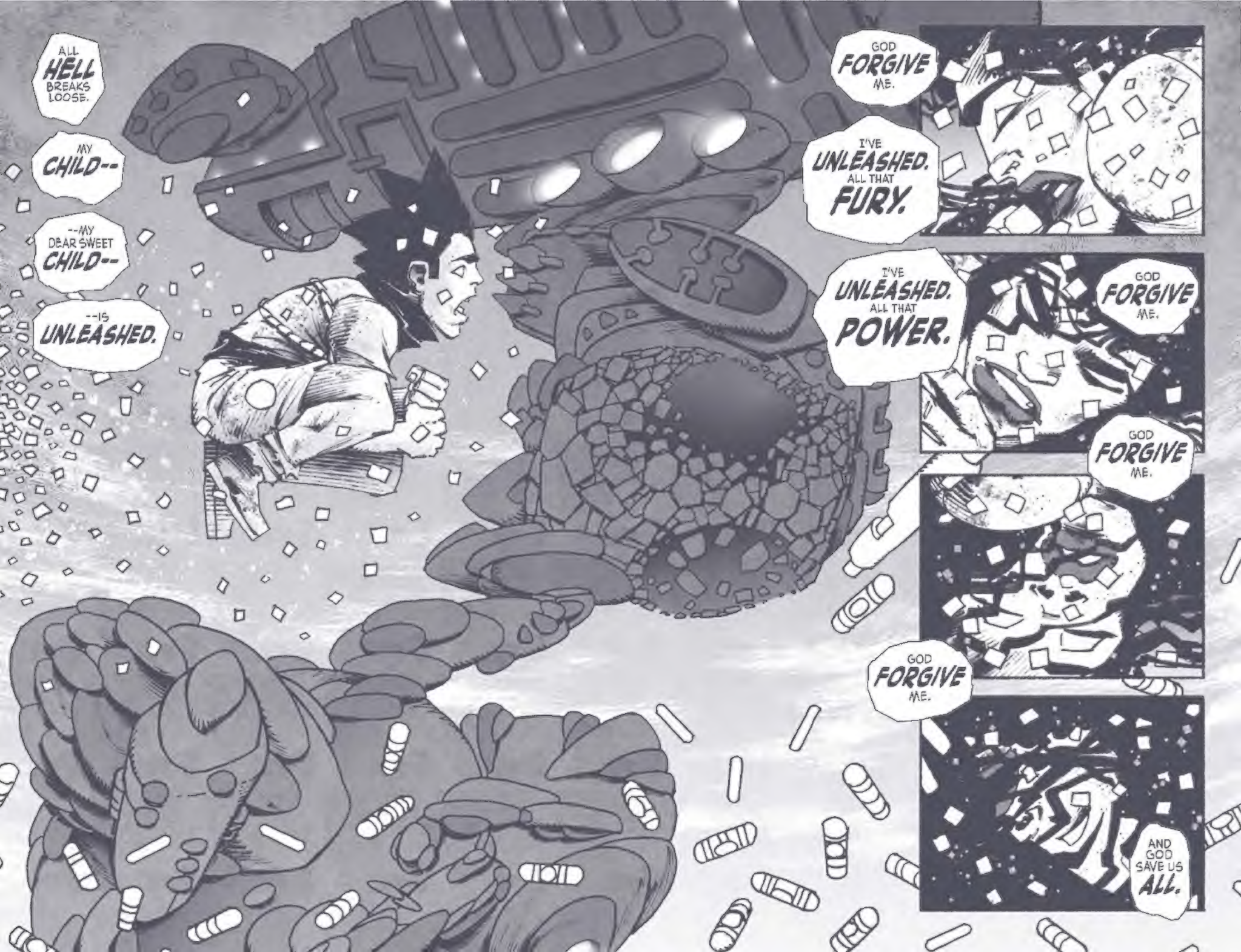
YET STILL I CAN HEAR HER.
THE BITCH.
THE GODDAMN BITCH.
SHE CHUCKLES.
RIGHT INSIDE MY HEAD.
VIRGO. SHE CHUCKLES.
SHE MOCKS ME.
RIGHT INSIDE MY HEAD.
THE BITCH.
VIRGO. YOU BITCH.

I GRAB HOLD OF SOME AQUARIUS SHIT THAT FEELS LIKE IT'S CONNECTED TO SOMETHING.
IT HOLDS.
I BARELY DO.

NO.
I CAN'T DO IT.
I CAN'T DO IT.
NOT YET I CAN'T.
I CAN'T DIE.
I CAN'T DIE.
NOT WHILE THAT BITCH--
--THAT BITCH--
--NOT WHILE THAT BITCH HAS STILL GOT HIM--
--I CAN'T DIE--
--NOT WHILE THAT BITCH IS STILL LIVING.
BUT MY ARMS--
--THEY HURT SO BAD--
--AND MY HANDS--
--THEY'RE JUST PLAIN DEAD--
--THEY'VE JUST GONE ALL NUMB--
--THEY'RE JUST PLAIN DAMN DEAD--
--THEY'RE DEAD-- MY HANDS ARE DEAD--
--MY FINGERS GOT NO BONES IN THEM--
--RAGDOLL.
I'M A RAGDOLL.
MADE OF RAGS.
NOTHING BUT RAGS.


MAMA.
YOU'RE ALWAYS THERE FOR ME, MAMA.
AND I'LL ALWAYS BE THERE FOR YOU.
ALWAYS.

BILLY.
AQUARIUS WAS A MISTAKE.
IT WAS A BRILLIANT MISTAKE.
BUT IT WAS A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.
CORRECT IT.
YES, MAMA.
SPARE NOTHING.
SPARE NO ONE.
SPARE NOTHING.
YES, MAMA.


ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE.
MY CHILD--
--MY DEAR SWEET CHILD--
--IS UNLEASHED.
GOD FORGIVE ME.
I'VE UNLEASHED. ALL THAT FURY.
I'VE UNLEASHED. ALL THAT POWER.
GOD FORGIVE ME.
GOD FORGIVE ME.
GOD FORGIVE ME.
AND GOD SAVE US ALL.

THAT SCREAM AGAIN.
NOT LIKE A CHILD AT ALL.
MORE LIKE AN ANGRY GOD.
MORE LIKE A SUPER-NOVA.
AND THERE'S NO AIR IN MY LUNGS.
ONLY FIRE.

YEAH, THAT SCREAM AGAIN.
AND ALL OF AQUARIUS STARTS SCREAMING, TOO.
AND ME, I RIDE THAT SCREAM--
--STRAIGHT INTO THE JAWS OF NOWHERE, I RIDE IT--
--I'M GONE...

CHAPTER 5

HARD PLASTIC SHUDDERS AND SHRIEKS AND SHATTERS.
ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE.
AND ALL THAT AQUARIUS SHIT--IT'S GONNA CHOP ME TO PIECES--
--IT'LL CHOP ME TO PIECES--
CHOP ME
TO PIECES
TO PIECES--

--BUT IT DOESN'T.
IT DOESN'T CUT ME.
IT DOESN'T EVEN TOUCH ME.
IT NEVER REACHES ME.
THE POWER OF ONE MIND--IT SHIELDS ME.
IT SAVES ME.
THE POWER OF ONE MIND.
THE POWER OF ONE CHILD.
MY CHILD.
BILLY.

BILLY.
MY SWEET, SWEET CHILD.
BUT--NOT EXACTLY A CHILD.
NOT ANYMORE.
NO.
NOT A CHILD.
BILLY-- HAS NEVER BEEN A CHILD.
NOT EXACTLY.
BECAUSE BILLY IS NOT HUMAN.
NOT ENTIRELY.
BILLY IS SOMETHING NEW.
BILLY IS SOMETHING THIS WRETCHED WORLD HAS NEVER SEEN.
EXCEPT IN LEGEND.
EXCEPT IN MYTH.

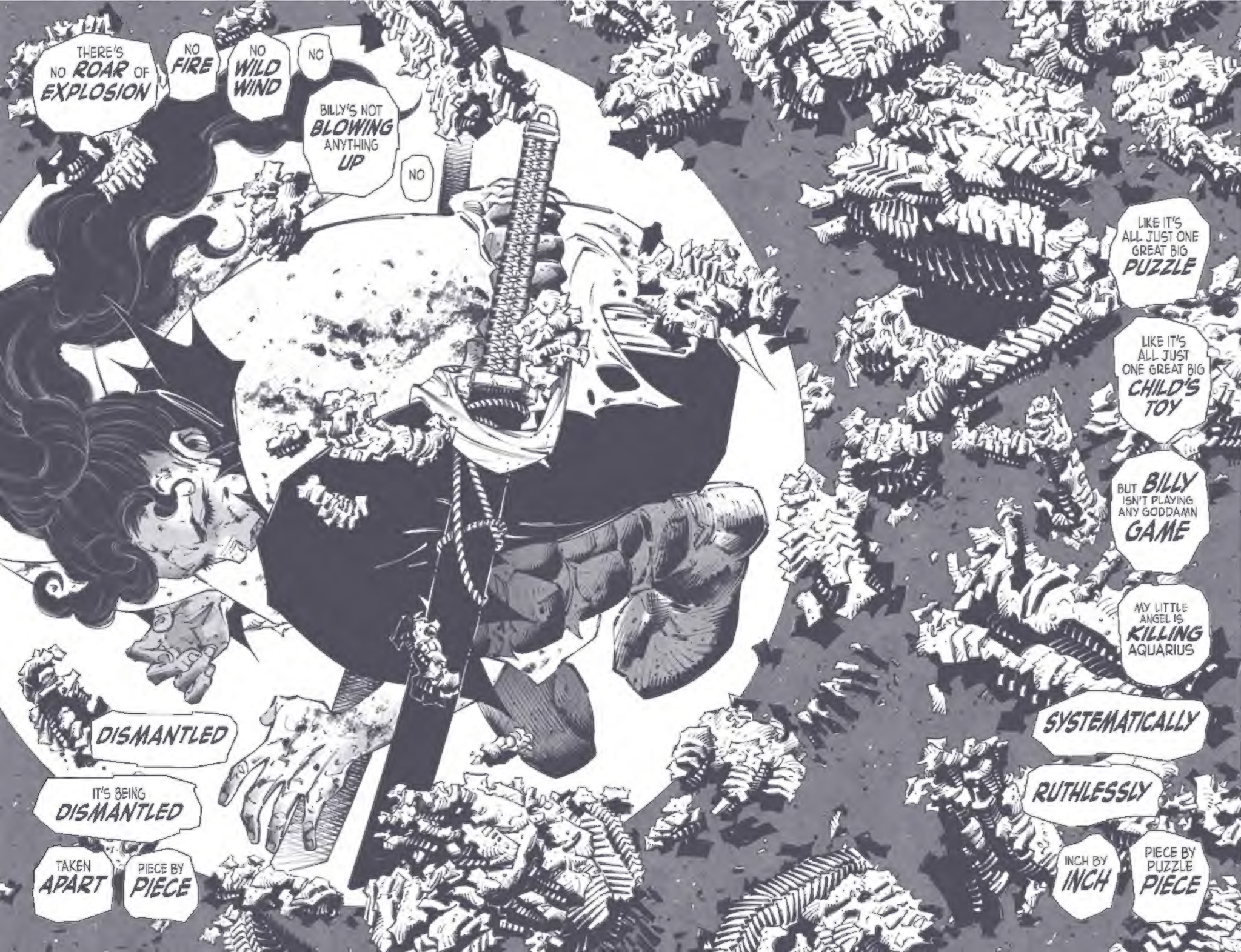
AND NOW THIS CREATURE --THIS ANGEL--
--THIS SAVIOR--
--THIS DESTROYER--
--IT LASHES OUT--
--IT CRIES OUT--
--WITH A VOICE THAT CRACKS INTO FALSETTO FURY.
AND THAT FURY FINDS ITS FOCUS.
AND A RIPPLE RUNS THROUGH EVERYTHING THERE IS.
AND EVERYTHING FLIES.
AND EVERYTHING SINGS.
AND AQUARIUS SCREAMS.
AND EVERYTHING FLIES.
AND EVERYTHING SINGS.

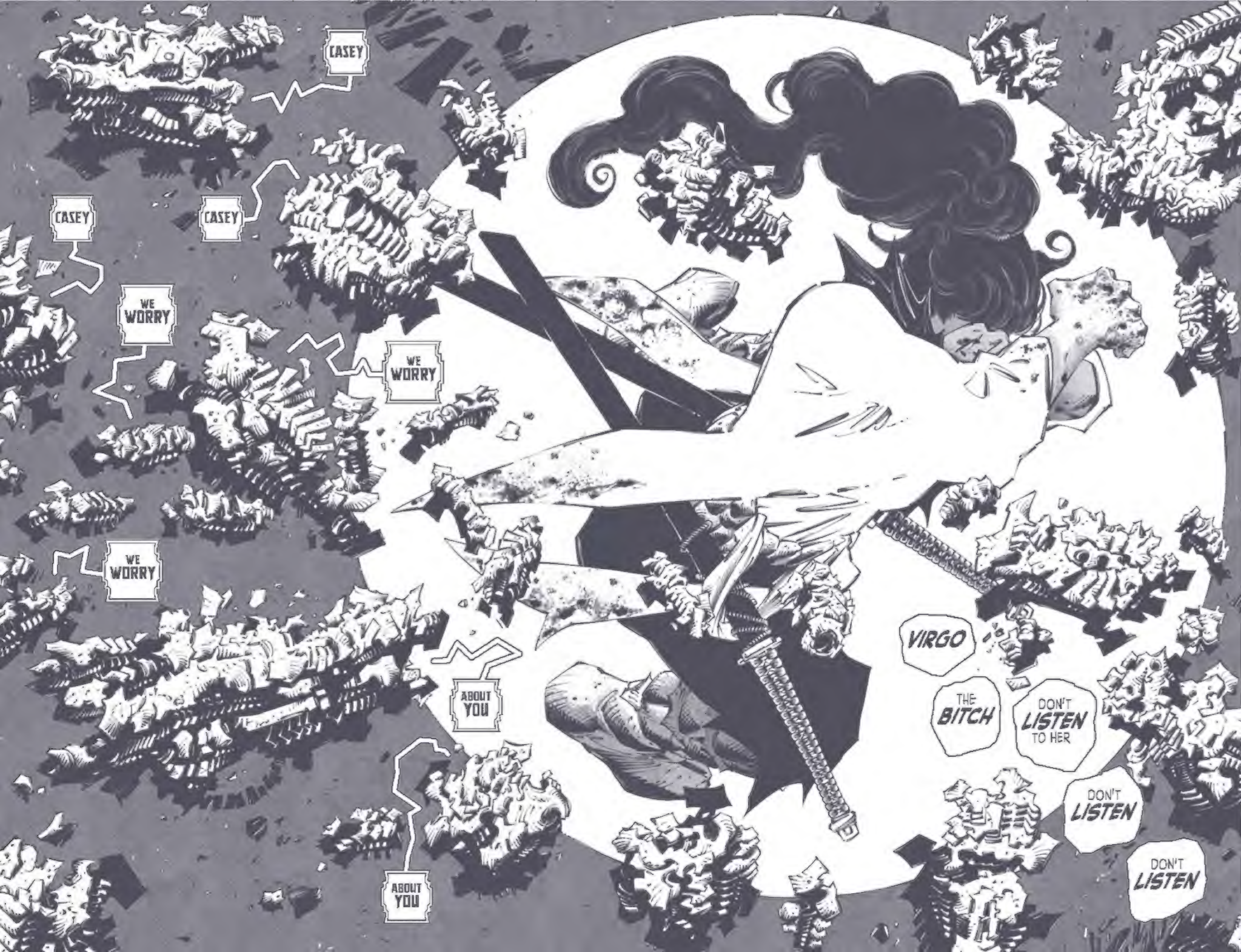
ME, I'M KNOCKED AROUND LIKE A PAIR OF OLD TENNIS SHOES IN A WASHING MACHINE.
WASHING
MACHINE
PROBLEM IS, THERE'S A SKULL AND A BRAIN AND ALL KINDS OF MUSCLES ATTACHED TO THOSE SHOES.
SO I GET KNOCKED AROUND PRETTY BAD, TOO.
KNOCKED AROUND
PRETTY BAD
KNOCKED AROUND
KICKED AROUND
PRETTY BAD

BILLY KEEPS ME SAFE
MAKES ONE OF THOSE GLOBES OF HIS SQUEEZE AROUND ME
TIGHT AROUND ME.
KEEPS ME SAFE
KEEPS THAT AQUARIUS SHIT
ALL THAT AQUARIUS SHIT
KEEPS IT FROM CRUSHING ME
FROM CHOPPING ME
TO PIECES
FROM SLICING ME UP
LIKE SANDWICH MEAT
FROM KILLING ME
HE STOPS IT
FROM KILLING ME

FROM KILLING ME
A HUNDRED THOUSAND TIMES OVER
FUNNY
IT'S FUNNY
WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT
HERE I AM
THE MOM
I'M THE MOM
IN THIS WEIRD LITTLE FAMILY I'M IN
I'M THE MOM
BUT HERE I AM
I'M THE ONE
IN THE WOMB
HELD BY THE BABY
MY BABY
IN A WOMB
THAT MAKES BILLY THE MOM
SILLY
FUNNY
WHEN YOU THINK OF IT.
SHOCK
I'M IN SHOCK

SHOCK
'M IN SHOCK
'M IN SHOCK
SO COPE WITH IT
SO DEAL
SO COPE WITH IT
YOU'RE TRAINED IN THIS
YOU'RE TRAINED AT THIS
YOU KNOW THE DRILL
YOU KNOW ALL THE DRILLS
SO COPE WITH IT
RIDE IT
JUST RIDE IT
IT'S ALL RIGHT
IT'S ALL RIGHT
IT'S ALL RIGHT
IT'S AQUARIUS THAT'S DYING
DYING
AQUARIUS DYING
IT'S AQUARIUS DYING
NOT ME
NOT ME


THERE'S NO ROAR OF EXPLOSION
NO FIRE
NO WILD WIND
NO
BILLY'S NOT BLOWING ANYTHING UP
NO
LIKE IT'S ALL JUST ONE GREAT BIG PUZZLE
LIKE IT'S ALL JUST ONE GREAT BIG CHILD'S TOY
BUT BILLY ISN'T PLAYING ANY GODDAMN GAME
MY LITTLE ANGEL IS KILLING AQUARIUS
SYSTEMATICALLY
RUTHLESSLY
INCH BY INCH
PIECE BY PUZZLE PIECE
DISMANTLED
IT'S BEING DISMANTLED
TAKEN APART
PIECE BY PIECE

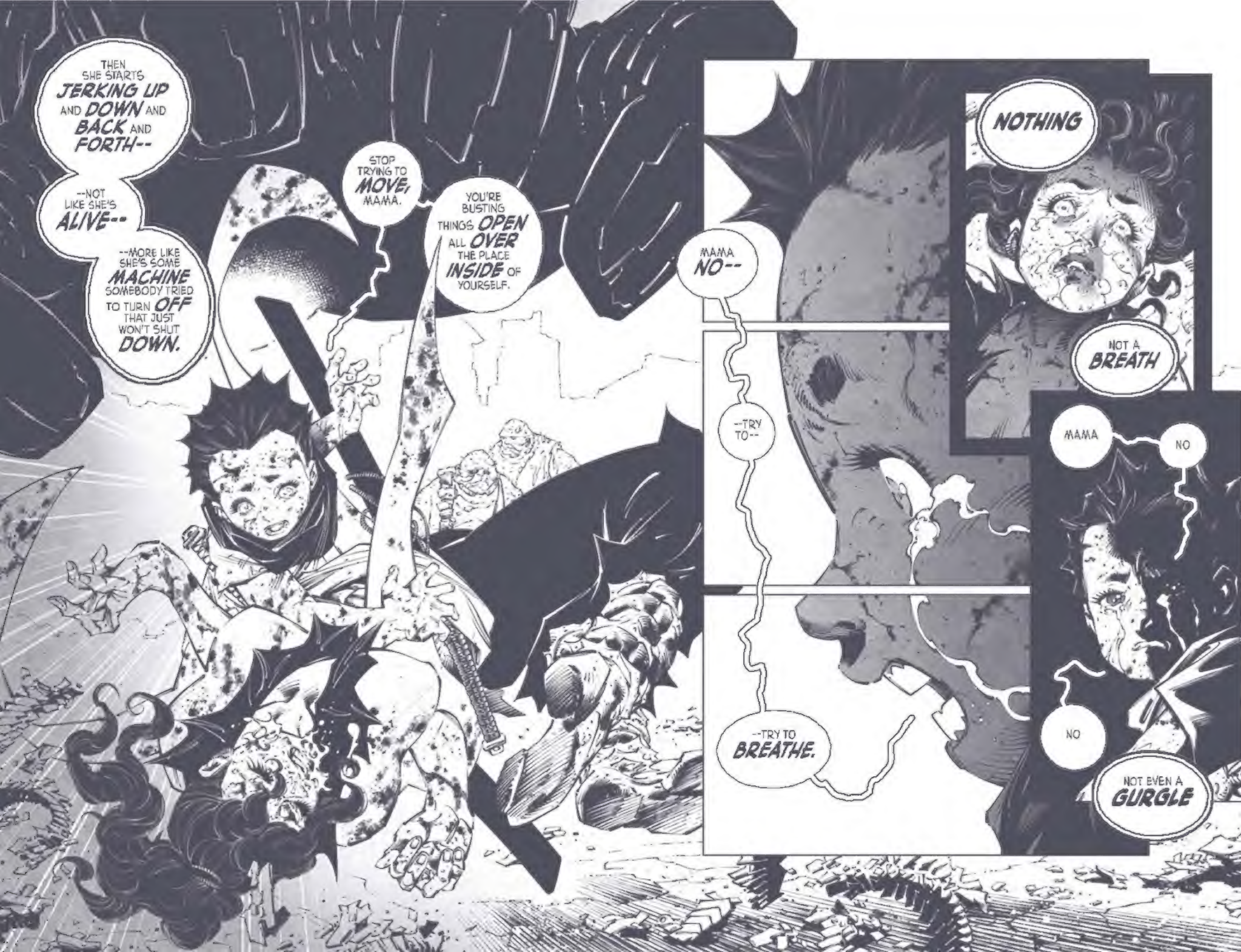

CASEY
CASEY
CASEY
WE WORRY
WE WORRY
WE WORRY
ABOUT YOU
ABOUT YOU
VIRGO
THE BITCH
DON'T LISTEN TO HER
DON'T LISTEN
DON'T LISTEN

BUT YOU NEVER LISTEN
YOU NEVER LISTEN
SUCH A TERRIBLE MESS
OF THINGS
THAT'S WHY YOU'VE MADE SUCH A MESS
SUCH A MESS
DON'T LISTEN
OF THINGS
SUCH A MESS
OF THINGS

DON'T LISTEN
BUT CASEY SWEET CASEY
YOU'VE GOT TO KEEP
AN OPEN MIND
YOU'VE GOT TO KEEP
AN OPEN MIND
GOT TO KEEP
AN OPEN MIND
BILLY
DON'T LISTEN
IT'S VIRGO
SHE LIES
THAT'S ALL SHE EVER DOES
SHE LIES

BILLY.
BE STRONG.
MAMA.
HOLD ON.
BILLY.
SURVIVE.
MAMA.
I BROUGHT HELP.
SCANNING. SCANNING.
INTERNAL DAMAGE EXTENSIVE.
SO FIX HER!
FIX HER NOW!
NO. BABY NO.
THAT. THAT THING. IT'S.
IT'S AQUARIUS.
IT'S FROM AQUARIUS.
ENEMY. IT'S ENEMY.

MAMA. MAMA. HOLD ON, MAMA.
WE'LL SAVE YOU. WE'LL FIX YOU UP GOOD.
INTERNAL HEMORRHAGE. INTERNAL HEMORRHAGE.
BLOOD LOSS CATA-STROPHIC.
ALERT. BLOOD LOSS CATA-STROPHIC.
HUKK
HUKK
BILLY FIND YOUR FATHER.
TELL HIM I
EVERY-THING INSIDE OF HER JUST STOPS.
JUST LIKE THAT.
IT JUST STOPS.


THEN SHE STARTS JERKING UP AND DOWN AND BACK AND FORTH--
--NOT LIKE SHE'S ALIVE--
--MORE LIKE SHE'S SOME MACHINE SOMEBODY TRIED TO TURN OFF THAT JUST WON'T SHUT DOWN.
STOP TRYING TO MOVE, MAMA.
YOU'RE BUSTING THINGS OPEN ALL OVER THE PLACE INSIDE OF YOURSELF.
MAMA NO--
--TRY TO--
--TRY TO BREATHE.
NOTHING
NOT A BREATH
MAMA
NO
NO
NOT EVEN A GURGLE

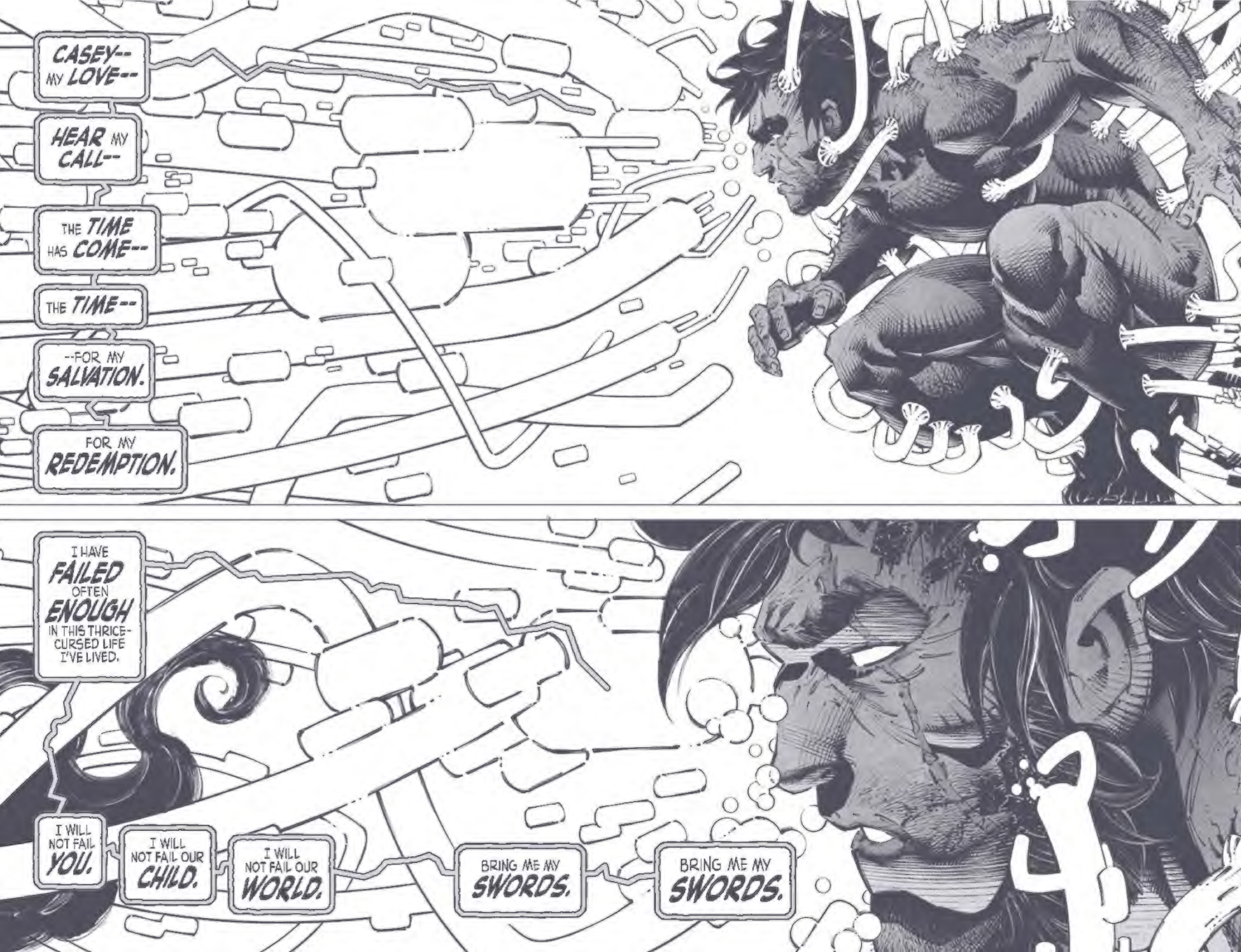
INTERNAL HEMORRHAGING CATASTROPHIC.
CARDIAC ARREST IMMINENT.
PULMONARY FAILURE IMMINENT
IMMEDIATE SYSTEMIC BIOCIRCUITRY RECONSTRUCTION IMPERATIVE.
YOUR NECK DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT, MAMA.
DON'T TRY TO MOVE.
BILLY
DON'T.
THAT'S BETTER, MAMA. THAT'S BETTER. YOU STAY STILL.
FIX HER, NURSEBOB. FIX HER UP GOOD.
YES, SIR.
AS YOU WISH, SIR.
BILLY, I BEG YOU. DON'T DO THIS.
THAT'S NO NURSE. IT'S VIRGO. SHE'LL KILL US BOTH.

NO.
I AM NOT VIRGO, CAPTAIN McKENNNA. NOR DOES SHE COMMAND ME.
TOLD YOU.
EVERY-THING'S GONNA BE FINE NOW, MAMA.
BILLY
DON'T
DON'T LET
DON'T LET HER
LIES
IT'S ALL LIES
I PRAY BILLY SURVIVES
I PRAY SHE KILLS ME
I PRAY SHE KILLS ME

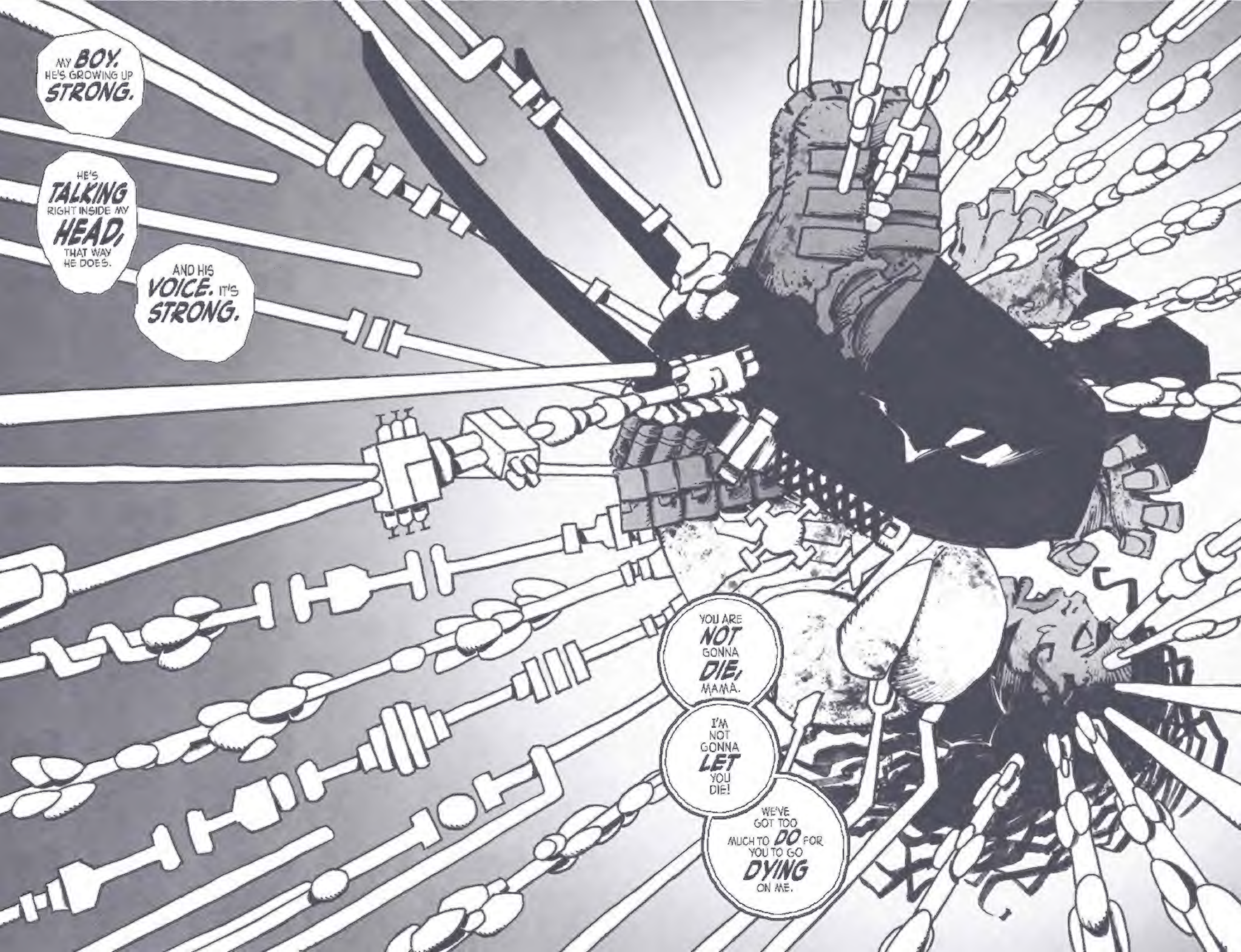
WRONG.
I AM NOT HERE TO KILL YOU, CAPTAIN McKENNA.
I AM HERE TO REPAIR YOU.
I AM HERE TO CORRECT YOU.
I AM HERE TO RESTORE YOU.
I AM HERE TO REPAIR YOU.
NO...
YES, MAMA.
IT'S GOING TO HURT--
--BUT YOU'RE GOING TO BE FINE.
EVERY-THING'S GOING TO BE JUST FINE.

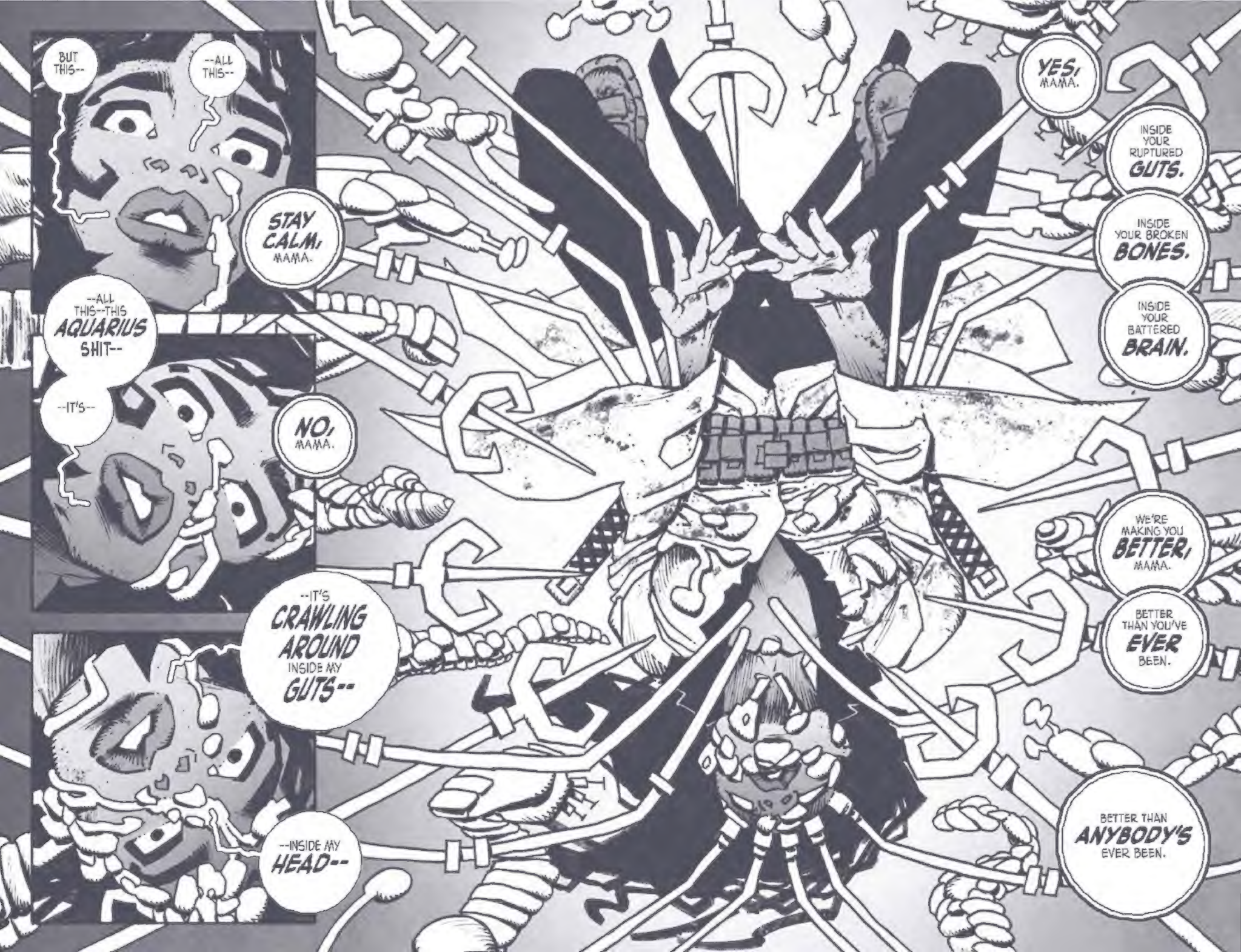
EVERY-THING'S GOING TO BE FINE.
EVERY-THING'S GOING TO BE--
--JUST THE WAY IT HAS TO BE.

BUT--
BUT BILLY-- THERE'S--
THERE'S NO ESCAPE--
ALL THIS AQUARIUS SHIT--
IT'S GOT ME--
SHE'S GOT ME--
VIRGO-- SHE'S GOT ME--
NO, MAMA.
YOU'RE WRONG.
IT'S ME WHO'S GOT YOU.
YOU'RE IN MY HANDS NOW.
MY HANDS--
--AND HIS.


CASEY-- MY LOVE--
HEAR MY CALL--
THE TIME HAS COME--
THE TIME--
--FOR MY SALVATION.
FOR MY REDEMPTION.
I HAVE FAILED OFTEN ENOUGH IN THIS THRICE-CURSED LIFE I'VE LIVED.
I WILL NOT FAIL YOU.
I WILL NOT FAIL OUR CHILD.
I WILL NOT FAIL OUR WORLD.
BRING ME MY SWORDS.
BRING ME MY SWORDS.

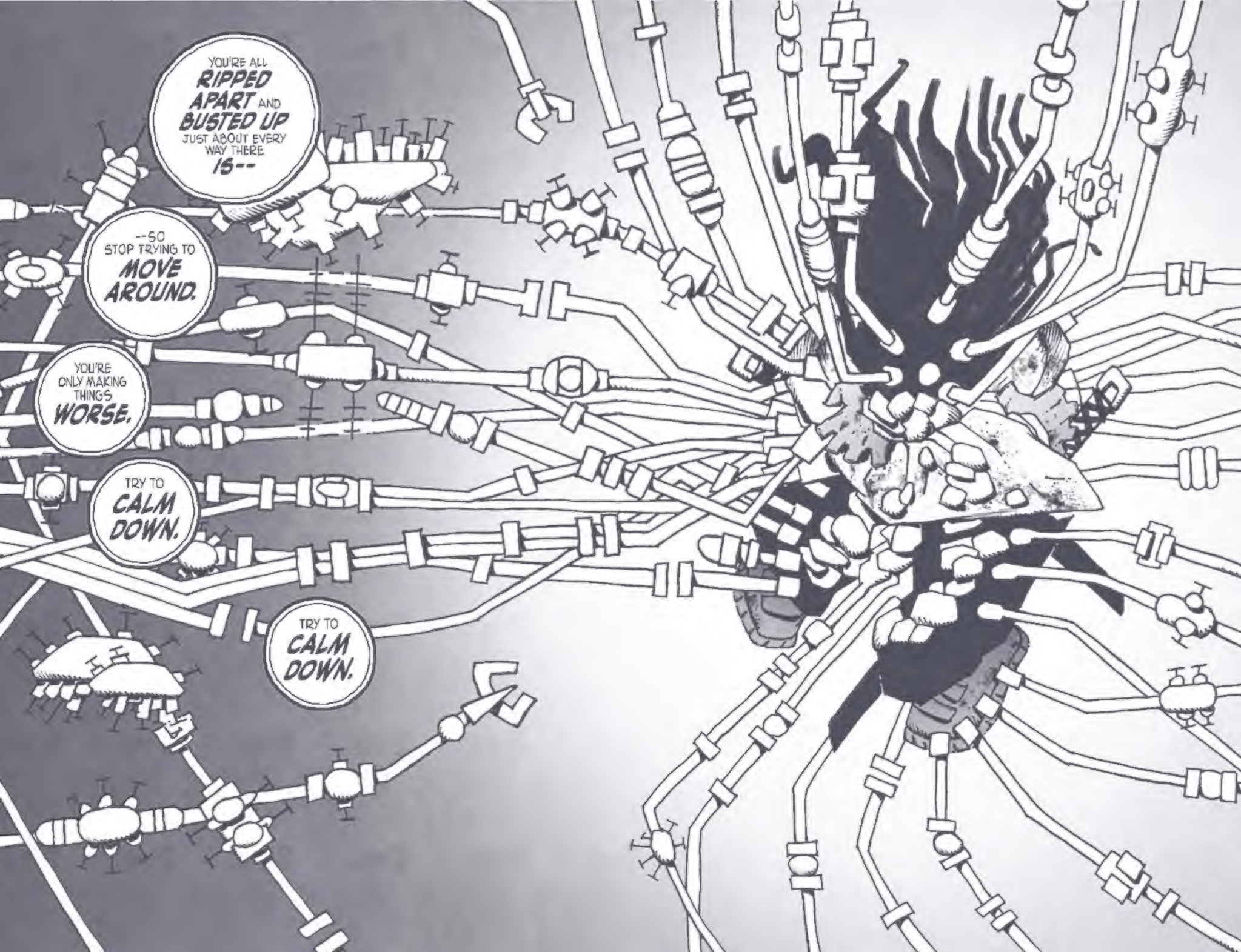
CHAPTER
6

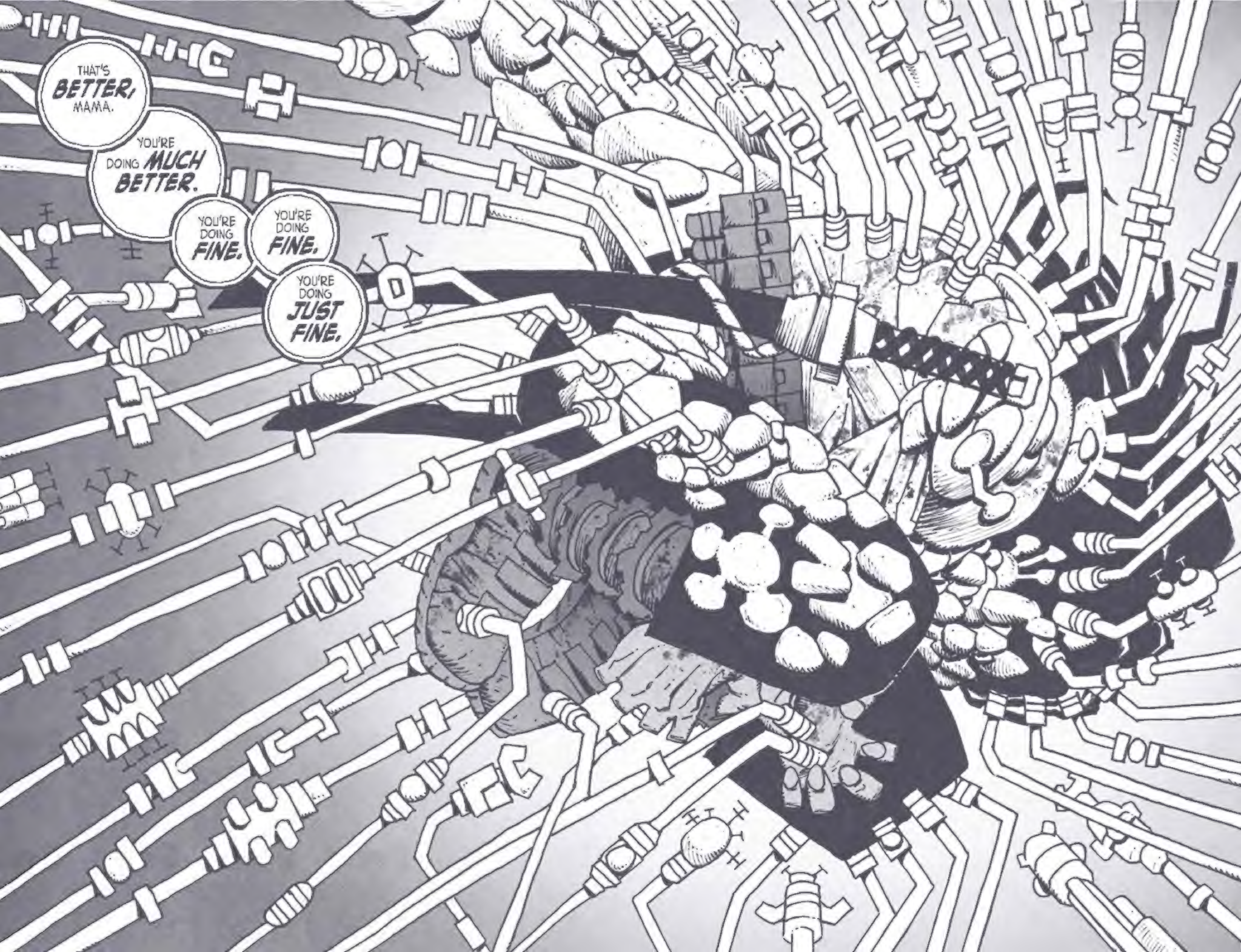

MY BOY. HE'S GROWING UP STRONG.
HE'S TALKING RIGHT INSIDE MY HEAD, THAT WAY HE DOES.
AND HIS VOICE. IT'S STRONG.
YOU ARE NOT GONNA DIE, MAMA.
I'M NOT GONNA LET YOU DIE!
WE'VE GOT TOO MUCH TO DO FOR YOU TO GO DYING ON ME.

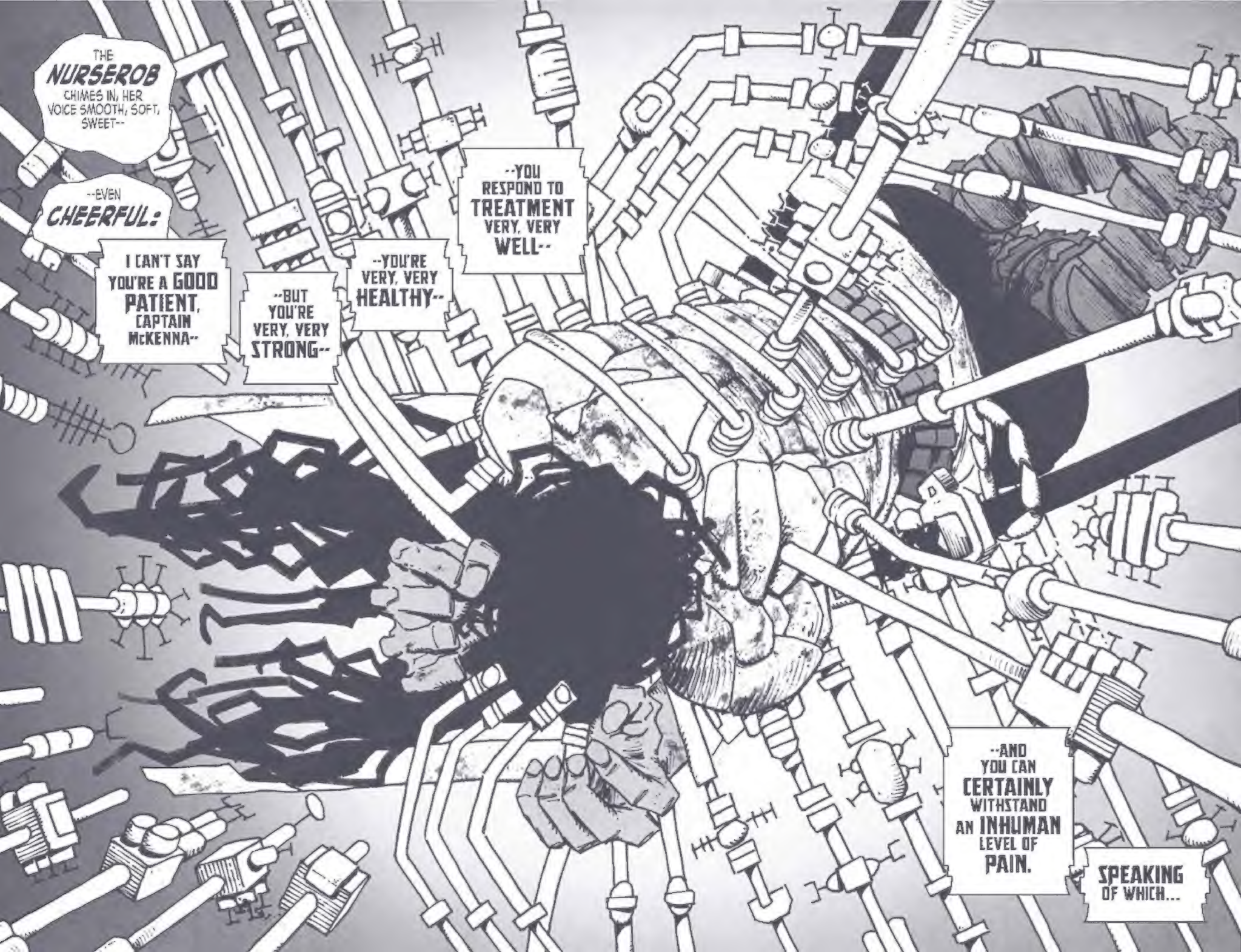

BUT THIS--
--ALL THIS--
STAY CALM, MAMA.
--ALL THIS--THIS AQUARIUS SHIT--
--IT'S--
NO, MAMA.
--IT'S CRAWLING AROUND INSIDE MY GUTS--
--INSIDE MY HEAD--
YES, MAMA.
INSIDE YOUR RUPTURED GUTS.
INSIDE YOUR BROKEN BONES.
INSIDE YOUR BATTERED BRAIN.
WE'RE MAKING YOU BETTER, MAMA.
BETTER THAN YOU'VE EVER BEEN.
BETTER THAN ANYBODY'S EVER BEEN.

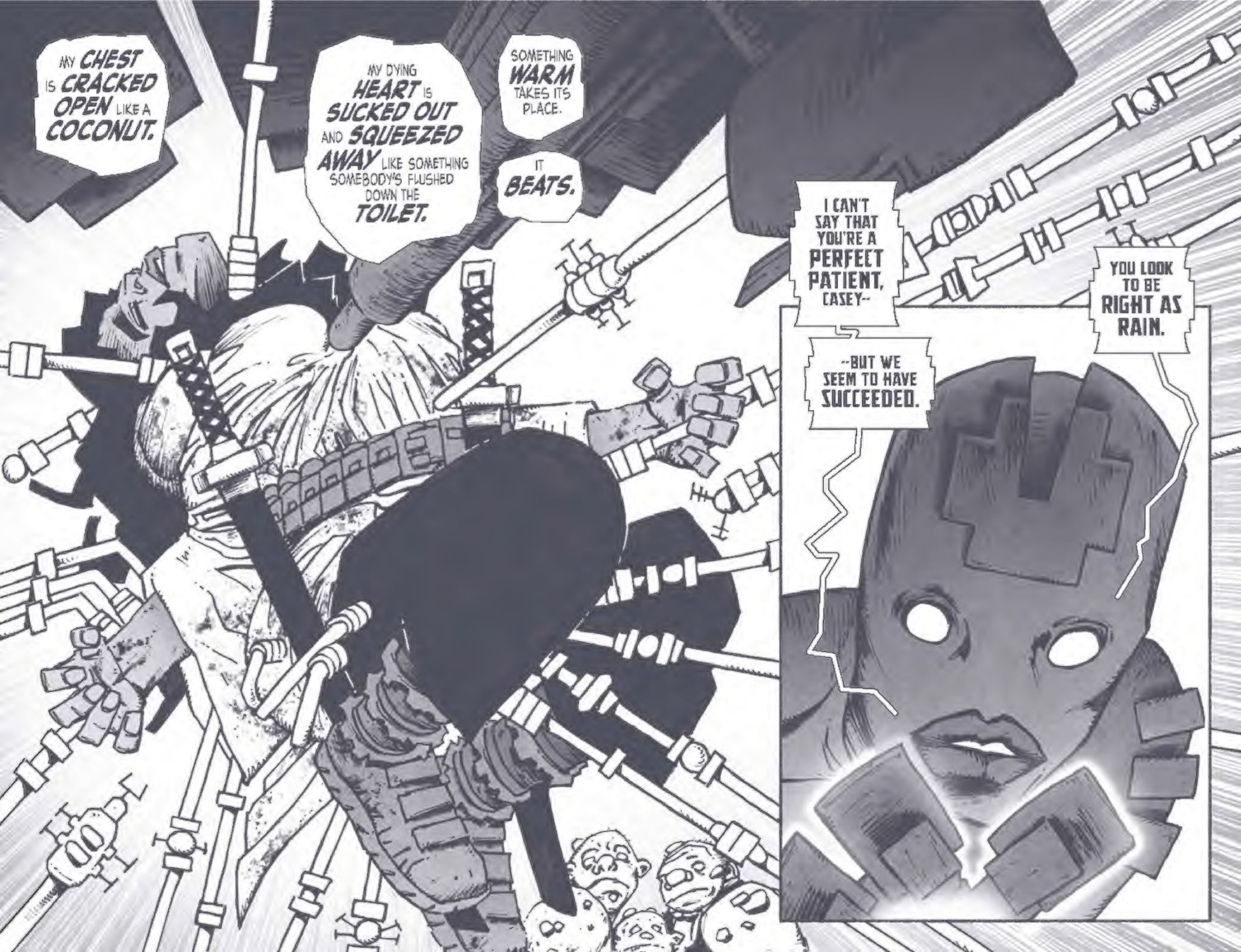
DON'T LET HER FOOL YOU, BILLY.
DON'T LET HER TRICK YOU.
IT'S VIRGO.
NO, MAMA.
IT'S VIRGO. SHE'S GONNA KILL ME.
NO, MAMA.
IT'S VIRGO.
SHE'S EATING--
--ME ALIVE--

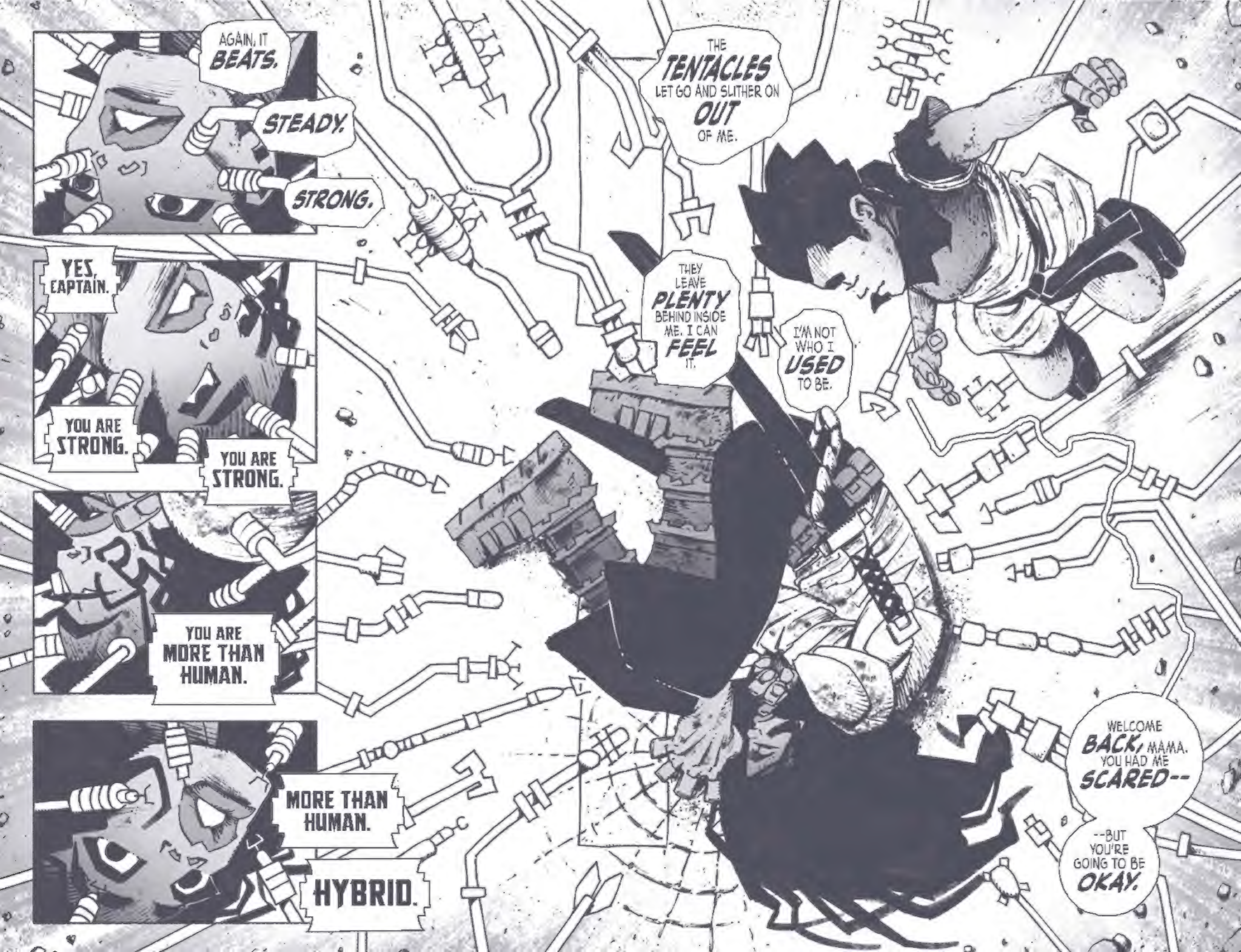
NO, MAMA.
VIRGO CAN'T HURT YOU.
NOT RIGHT NOW; SHE CAN'T.
NOT WHEN I'M WATCHING; SHE CAN'T.
YOU JUST STAY CALM.
I NEED YOU CALM.
WE'RE DOING ONE HECK OF A LOT OF WORK INSIDE OF YOU.

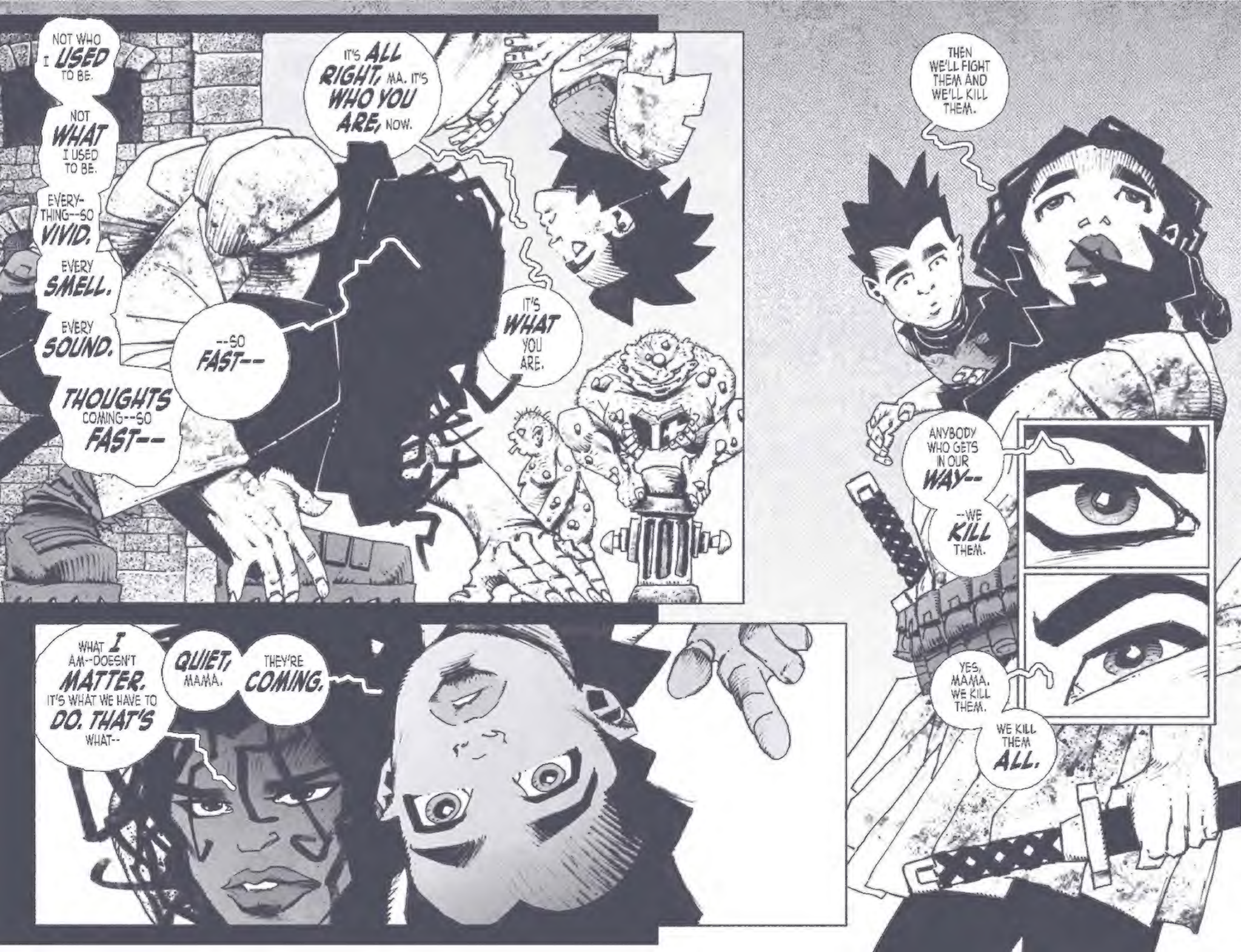

YOU'RE ALL RIPPED APART AND BUSTED UP JUST ABOUT EVERY WAY THERE IS--
--SO STOP TRYING TO MOVE AROUND.
YOU'RE ONLY MAKING THINGS WORSE.
TRY TO CALM DOWN.
TRY TO CALM DOWN.

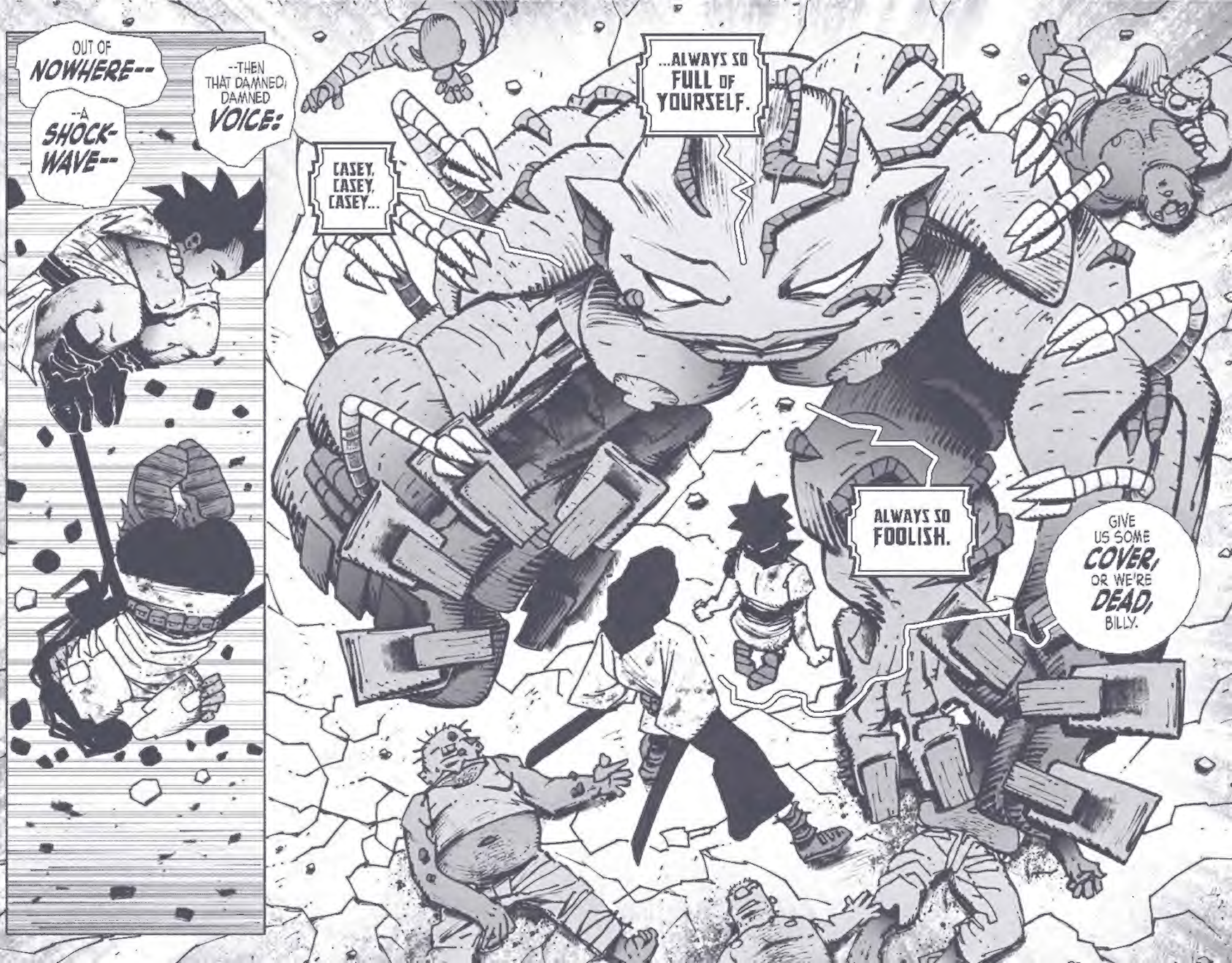

THAT'S BETTER, MAMA.
YOU'RE DOING MUCH BETTER.
YOU'RE DOING FINE.
YOU'RE DOING FINE.
YOU'RE DOING JUST FINE.


THE NURSEROB CHIMES IN, HER VOICE SMOOTH, SOFT, SWEET--
--EVEN CHEERFUL:
I CAN'T SAY YOU'RE A GOOD PATIENT, CAPTAIN McKENNA--
--BUT YOU'RE VERY, VERY STRONG--
--YOU'RE VERY, VERY HEALTHY--
--YOU RESPOND TO TREATMENT VERY, VERY WELL--
--AND YOU CAN CERTAINLY WITHSTAND AN INHUMAN LEVEL OF PAIN.
SPEAKING OF WHICH...


MY CHEST IS CRACKED OPEN LIKE A COCONUT.
MY DYING HEART IS SUCKED OUT AND SQUEEZED AWAY LIKE SOMETHING SOMEBODY'S FLUSHED DOWN THE TOILET.
SOMETHING WARM TAKES ITS PLACE.
IT BEATS.
I CAN'T SAY THAT YOU'RE A PERFECT PATIENT, CASEY--
--BUT WE SEEM TO HAVE SUCCEEDED.
YOU LOOK TO BE RIGHT AS RAIN.


AGAIN, IT BEATS.
STEADY.
STRONG.
YES, CAPTAIN.
YOU ARE STRONG.
YOU ARE STRONG.
YOU ARE MORE THAN HUMAN.
MORE THAN HUMAN.
HYBRID.
THE TENTACLES LET GO AND SLITHER ON OUT OF ME.
THEY LEAVE PLENTY BEHIND INSIDE ME. I CAN FEEL IT.
I'M NOT WHO I USED TO BE.
WELCOME BACK, MAMA. YOU HAD ME SCARED--
--BUT YOU'RE GOING TO BE OKAY.


NOT WHO I USED TO BE.
NOT WHAT I USED TO BE.
EVERY-THING--SO VIVID.
EVERY SMELL.
EVERY SOUND.
THOUGHTS COMING--SO FAST--
--SO FAST--
IT'S ALL RIGHT, MA. IT'S WHO YOU ARE, NOW.
IT'S WHAT YOU ARE.
THEN WE'LL FIGHT THEM AND WE'LL KILL THEM.
ANYBODY WHO GETS IN OUR WAY--
--WE KILL THEM.
YES, MAMA. WE KILL THEM.
WE KILL THEM ALL.
WHAT I AM--DOESN'T MATTER. IT'S WHAT WE HAVE TO DO. THAT'S WHAT--
QUIET, MAMA.
THEY'RE COMING.

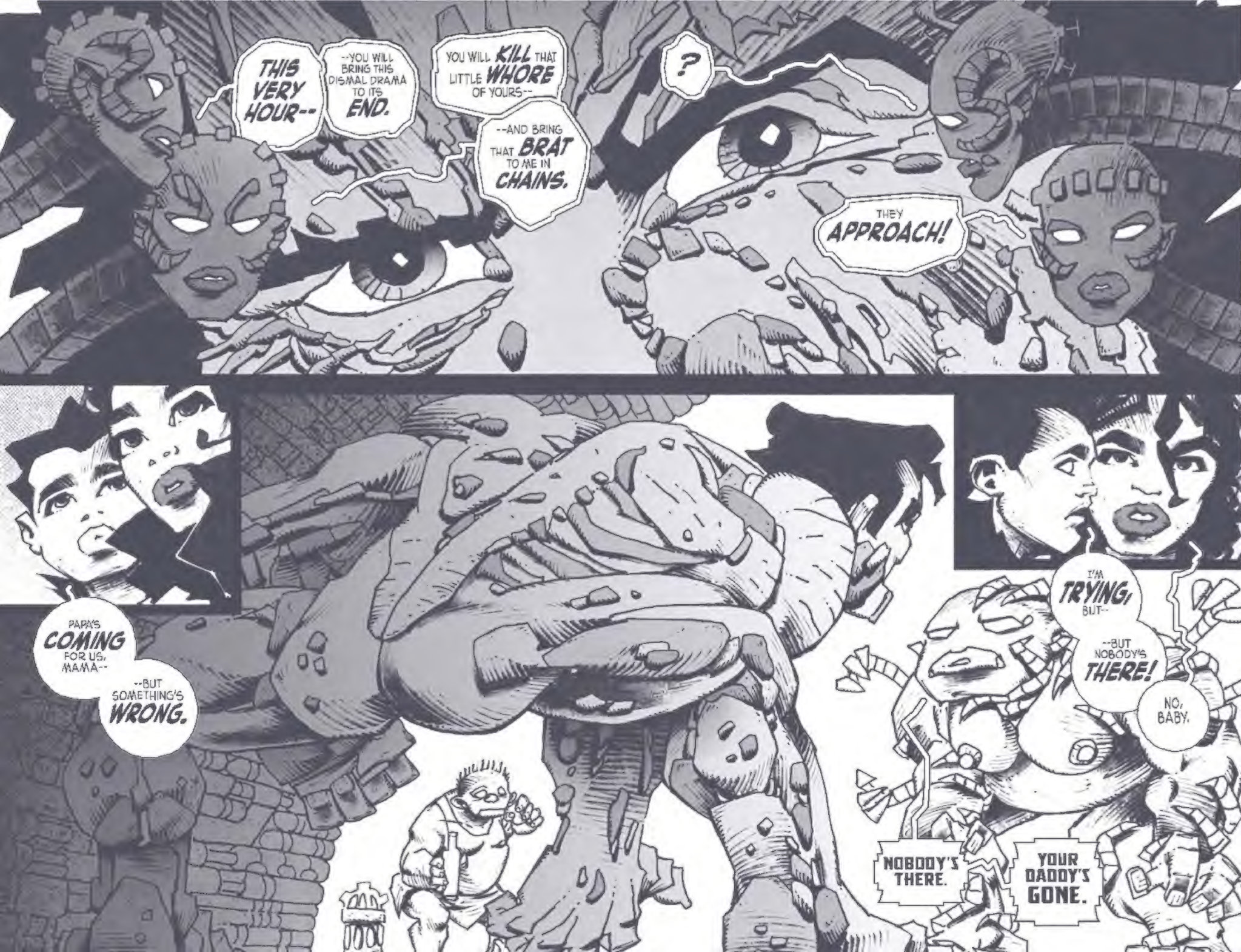

OUT OF NOWHERE--
--A SHOCK-WAVE--
--THEN THAT DAMNED, DAMNED VOICE:
CASEY, CASEY, CASEY...
...ALWAYS SO FULL OF YOURSELF.
ALWAYS SO FOOLISH.
GIVE US SOME COVER, OR WE'RE DEAD, BILLY.

DON'T BE AFRAID, BILLY. YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.
YOU COULD BLOW THAT THING TO BITS.
BLOW THAT THING TO BITS.
STOP
I COULD BLOW IT TO BITS.
I COULD BLOW IT TO BITS--
--RIGHT NOW.
BUT YOU'RE TOO SMART FOR THAT. YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE CONTROL OF IT.
NO MISTAKES, DARLING.
NO, MAMA.
NO MISTAKES.

WE EXALT YOU!
YOU ARE BOUND FOR GREAT-NESS!
CITIES WILL COLLAPSE BENEATH YOUR FEET!
NATIONS OF HUMANS WILL SCREAM AND BURN AND PERISH!
YOU WILL STRIDE THE EARTH--A COLOSSUS!
AND ANY WHO DENY YOU--
--ANY WHO BETRAY YOU--
INDESTRUCTIBLE!
--ANY WHO DEFY YOU--
RELENTLESS!
RAVENOUS!
--WILL BE DEVOURED AND DIGESTED--
--AND SPEWN OUT AS DETESTED DETRITUS!

BOLD HERO.
MY BOLD, BRAVE HERO.
SHE'S COMING FOR YOU.
CASEY. SHE'S COMING FOR YOU.
SHE AND THE CHILD.
THE BEAUTIFUL CHILD.
EVERYTHING MUST BE MADE READY.
EVERYTHING MUST BE JUST SO.
YOU MUST BE READY.
YOU MUST BE JUST SO.
YOU MUST BE FULLY EVOLVED.
YOU WILL BE GLORIOUS TO BEHOLD-- BEAUTIFUL BEYOND ALL DESCRIPTION!
FEEL YOUR POWER, SON OF MAN!
FEEL YOUR POWER, SON OF AQUARIUS!
WE SALUTE YOU!
--WE EXALT YOU!

WE EXALT YOU!
WE INSPECT YOU!
WE PROBE YOU!
WE INJECT YOU!
WE FILL YOU!
WE ENFLAME YOU!
YOU QUICKEN!
YOU HARDEN!
YOU SWELL!
NOW AND FOR-EVER--
--WE EXALT YOU!
WE SPLAY OURSELVES TO YOU!
YOUR TIME IS COME!


THIS VERY HOUR--
--YOU WILL BRING THIS DISMAL DRAMA TO ITS END.
YOU WILL KILL THAT LITTLE WHORE OF YOURS--
--AND BRING THAT BRAT TO ME IN CHAINS.
?
THEY APPROACH!
PAPA'S COMING FOR US, MAMA--
--BUT SOMETHING'S WRONG.
I'M TRYING, BUT--
--BUT NOBODY'S THERE!
NO, BABY.
NOBODY'S THERE.
YOUR DADDY'S GONE.

THAT THING-- IT ONLY LOOKS LIKE YOUR PAPA.
VIRGO'S JUST TRYING TO TRICK YOU AGAIN.
BUT YOU'RE TOO SMART FOR VIRGO.
YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT YOUR PAPA.
NO.
NOT THE MAN I LOVED.
THE MAN I LOVED IS DEAD.
ERASED.

THAT THING-- THAT KILLING MACHINE--
--IS HERE TO KILL US.
IT'S HERE TO KILL US ALL.
DON'T GET SCARED.
DON'T GET SCARED.

YOU HAVE THE POWER, BILLY.
KILL IT.
DESTROY IT.

GOD.

PRAISE JESUS.

DON'T GET SCARED, BILLY.

DON'T GET SCARED.

GOD.

I'M NOT SCARED, MAMA.

IT'S JUST LIKE YOU SAID.

THAT'S NOT PAPA.

PAPA'S DEAD.

THEN BILLY **SINGS.**

AND THE **ANGELS** SING.

AND MY RONIN--HE **BELLOWS.**

AND **VIRGO--** THAT **BITCH--**

--SHE SCREAMS.

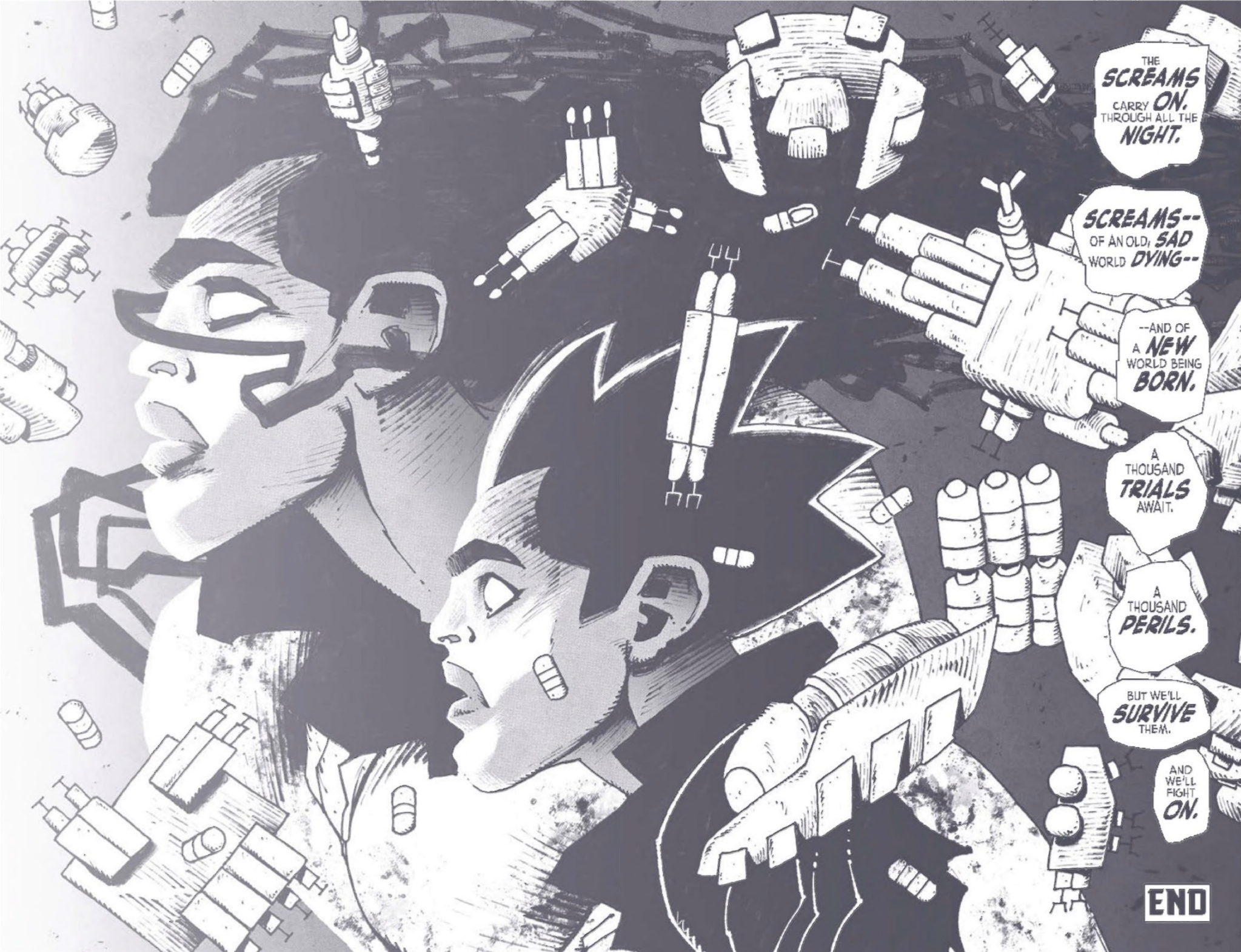
DEATH, IT'S **CLOSE.**

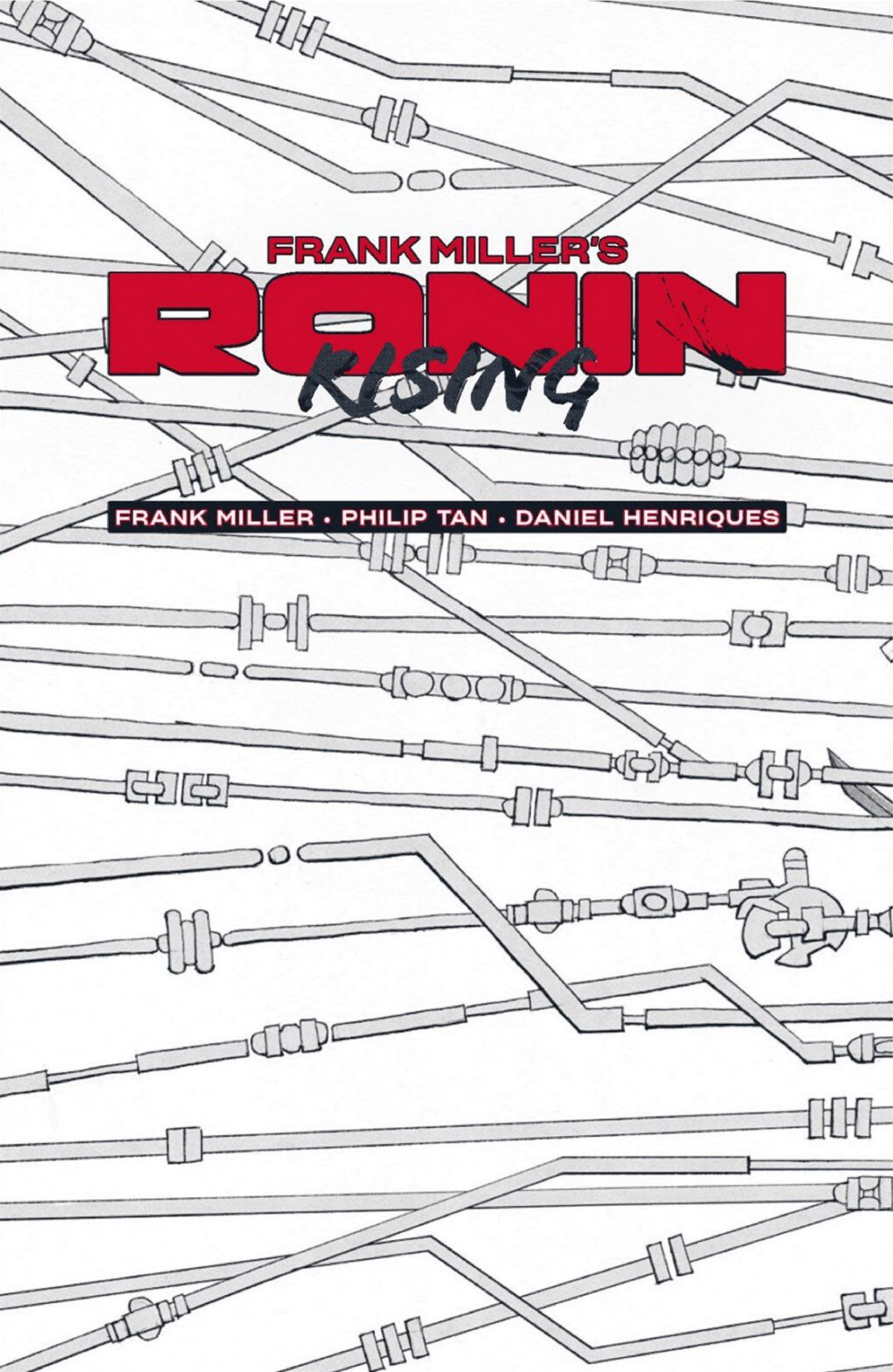
VERY CLOSE.

AND VIRGO. DIES.
AND STILL MY BABY SINGS.
AND AQUARIUS SCREAMS.
AND STILL MY BABY SINGS.
AND MY RONIN DIES.
AND STILL MY BABY SINGS.
AND STILL MY BABY SINGS.

WE RIDE A WAVE OF ROARING, ROILING, HELL-FIRE.
AND STILL AQUARIUS SCREAMS.
MY LITTLE DARLING SHRIEKS--
--THAT CHILD CRY AN ANGEL'S PLUNGING SWORD.
JUDGMENT DAY IS COME.

AND AQUARIUS SCREAMS.
AND AQUARIUS SCREAMS.
AND AQUARIUS SCREAMS.
AND AQUARIUS DIES.
AND AQUARIUS DIES.
AND AQUARIUS DIES.


THE SCREAMS CARRY ON. THROUGH ALL THE NIGHT.
SCREAMS-- OF AN OLD, SAD WORLD DYING--
--AND OF A NEW WORLD BEING BORN.
A THOUSAND TRIALS AWAIT.
A THOUSAND PERILS.
BUT WE'LL SURVIVE THEM.
AND WE'LL FIGHT ON.
END


FRANK MILLER'S
RONIN
RISING
FRANK MILLER • PHILIP TAN • DANIEL HENRIQUES

WHO WILL RISE FROM THE ASHES OF HELL? AND WHO WILL PERISH?

"A WORTHY SEQUEL TO AN ALREADY LEGENDARY TALE."
—*CBR*

"JUST WHEN YOU THINK IT CAN'T GET MORE EPIC, IT DOES."
—MICHAEL FITZGERALD TROY

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